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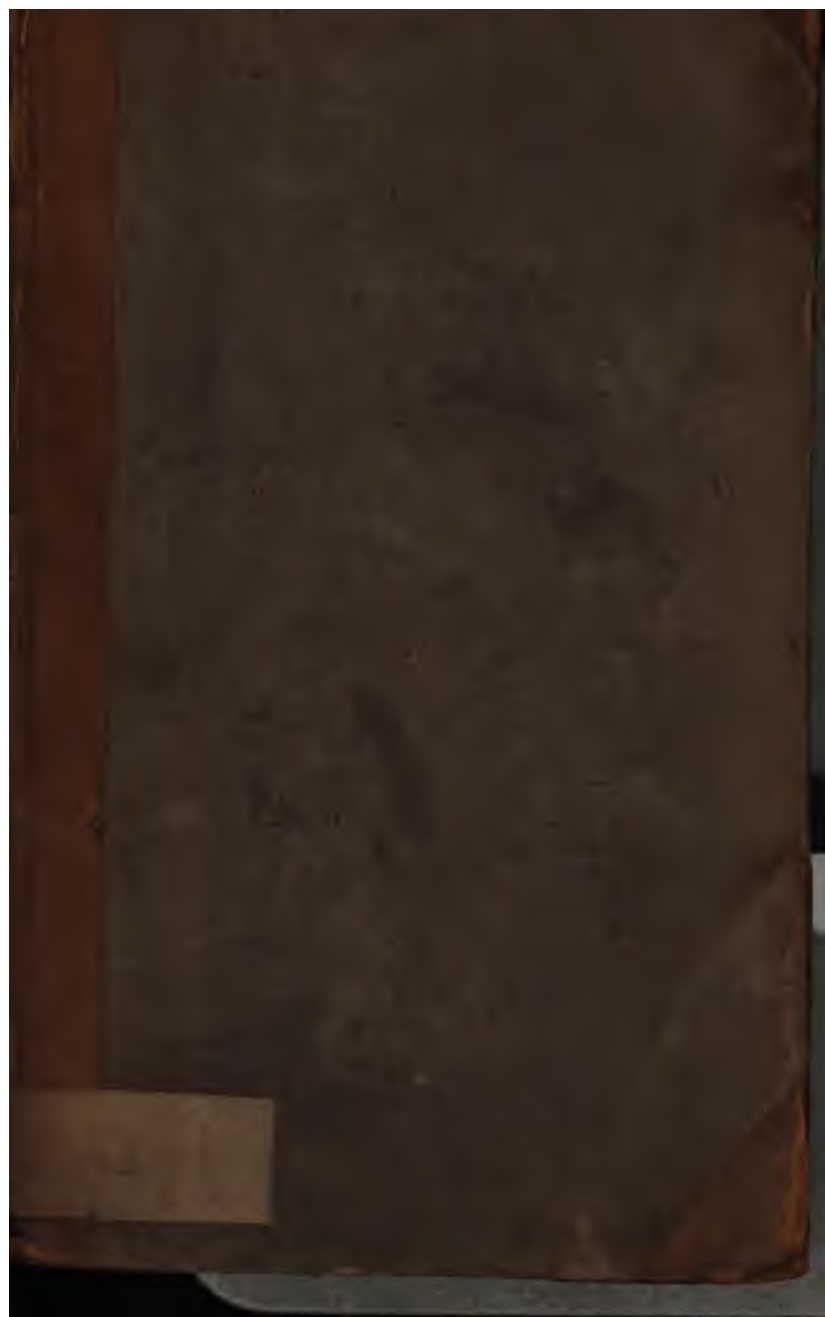
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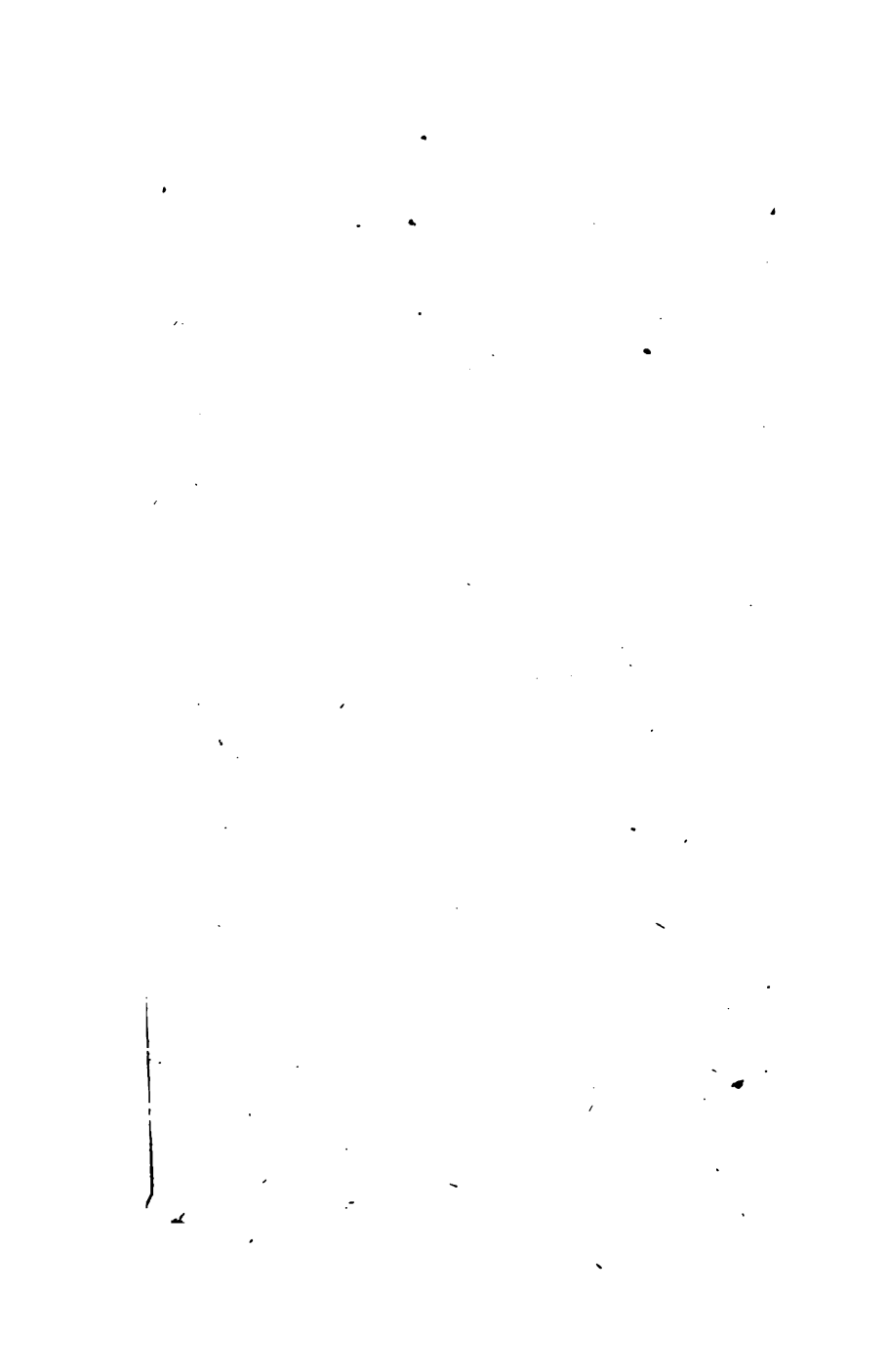
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THE
LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
PAUL PLAINTIVE, Esq.
An Author.

COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS,
AND INTERSPERSED WITH
SPECIMENS OF HIS GENIUS,
IN PROSE AND POETRY.

BY MARTIN GRIBALDUS SWAMMERDAM,
(HIS NEPHEW AND EXECUTOR.)

"The chief glory of every people arises from its authors."
JOHNSON.

VOL. I.

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1811.

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DEDICATION.

TO WILLIAM MUDFORD.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE a *peculiar pleasure* in dedicating the following pages to you, because I know how much you have interested yourself in the progress of their composition, and how anxious you are that their success with the public may be equal to your wishes.

But you have, also, another claim to

this memorial of my regard for you, and one which deserves a higher commendation than my abhorrence of even apparent adulation will permit me to bestow: I mean, the kind offer which you once made me of permitting me to place your name in the title-page, if I thought it could be of any service to the work. This practice is, I know, not unfrequent in modern times: and though I justly appreciated the friendly motives that prompted you to such an offer, yet, I could not prevail upon myself to be accessory to a fraud, even as innocent as that would have been.

For many hints which you suggested to me, and improvements which you

proposed, while the work was passing through the press, and all of which you will find I have adopted, accept my most sincere acknowledgments.

Were I, however, to specify the numerous *occasions* on which you have politely served me, or the *many hours* which you have *devoted* to my *benefit*, I should not only swell this dedication to an inordinate length, but do that which I do not wish to do. And I am well convinced, that in all which you have done for my welfare, *you have found more real pleasure in the success of your endeavours*, than from any eulogium which I could offer.

Yet, you must permit me to assure you, that *your friendship for me cannot exceed mine for you* : and that there is *no one living, more truly interested in all that concerns you, than*

Dear Sir,

Yours, most faithfully,

M. G. SWAMMERDAM.

August 20th, 1811.

PREFACE.

IF the reader finds any thing in the following volumes which he thinks does not belong to my illustrious relative, let him produce a better claimant, and to him shall be given all that he can testify to be his. If he cannot do this, he must contrive to reconcile the matter to his understanding in the best way he is able. For myself, I solemnly avow that every line of this work was truly and faithfully written either by Paul Plaintive himself, or by me, in the execution of my present office.

In writing the life of my friend and relation, I have abstained from the modern practice of introducing all the letters of the deceased which I could amass, and making them the biographer instead of myself. Not that I wanted such materials: but I preferred to incorporate their contents, when necessary, with the general narrative; and I cannot help thinking that the reader will prefer my plan.

I still possess ample stores to carry down the life of Mr. Plaintive to that period of it when he retired from public notice, and sought the true *otium cum dignitate* in his native village, *patrios findere sarculo agros*. This happened,

however, only a few years before his death; and should the reception of these volumes tell me that this continuation and conclusion of his *memoirs* would be acceptable, I should not shrink from the labour of preparing them for the press. Let the public look to it therefore: it will be their own fault if they never hear any more either of my kinsman or myself.

I have been so often considered as a descendant from the celebrated Dutch naturalist, whose name I bear, and whose skill in cutting up insects is so well known to the learned, that I cannot help availing myself of this opportunity to set the question at rest for

ever, by recounting the origin of my name, which was first bestowed upon an ancestor of mine, like the cognomen of the Romans, in commemoration of a remarkable action.

A paternal great grandfather happened to experience the same mishap as Sterne relates to have befallen him in his infancy,—he fell into a mill-dam. With great alacrity, however, and no less skill, he contrived to paddle out of it; and by one of those accidents which sometimes determine the greatest events in life, he acquired, from his companions, the nick-name of *Swam-a-dam*, with which compellation not being displeased, as it recorded an event of which

he was partly vain, he suffered its gradual adoption by the whole neighbourhood, and it cleaved to him and his posterity ever afterwards.

Such was the origin of my name, and I am much inclined to suspect that a cause something similar may, perhaps, in times long past, have occasioned that of the great naturalist, especially when I consider the aquatic nature of his country, and the greater probability, therefore, of such an accident. But I refer this to the learned.

August 17th, 1811.

M. G. S.

INTRODUCTION.

JUDICIOUS panegyric may be reckoned among the most difficult operations of the human mind, for there is nothing which more requires of us to lay all our passions, all our little affections, jealousies and resentments to sleep, and to awaken, in their highest vigour, all the energies, all the perspicacity and all the acuteness of our intellect.

It is strange to think, however, upon what fanciful subjects some learned men have chosen to bestow their eulogiums : as if to shew mankind that the meanest topics were capable of illustration when wit and genius sat down to the task. And perhaps they were right, though I do not undertake to say so positively. For instance, did not the profound scho-

liast, *Michael Psellus* write in praise of the *louse*, and *Majorradius* in praise of *mud*? *Erasmus* did not disdain to sing the praise of *folly*, nor *Dousa* of the *shadow*: nay, even diseases have found their panegyrists, as the *gout* in *Lucian* and *Puckmeier*, and the *quartidian fever* in *Galissard*; and *Bruno*, the impious author of the *Spaccio della bestia triumpante*, about which the English reader may learn something in the *Spectator*, No. 389, actually pronounced a dissertation in praise of the *Devil*, in a public harangue at Wittemberg.

But I might extend my erudite information yet further, were I to enumerate all the strange things which learned men have praised: I shall content myself, therefore, with the above list, sufficient, in all conscience, to justify me in writing upon a subject yet unattempted by any author that I am acquainted with: and surely the reader will see a variety of cogent reasons, without my pointing

them out, why a novel writer should celebrate

THE PRAISE OF POVERTY.

Yes : ye that have houses, land or money, I pity you: ye that have accumulated articles of splendor, the gewgaws of pride, to tickle your own vanity, and to please that of the world, I mourn for you; ye that have toiled for wealth and have earned it with the sweat of your brows, receive my commiseration: ye that are beginning the career of fortune, smiling at her golden visions and panting to snatch at them, hold—desist—you chase a phantom that lures you to misery: ye that bend o'er your swollen bags and count their treasures, with eyes that swim in rapture and hearts that beat with joy, I weep for you: oh! ye rich of all denominations, of every clime and every station, I mourn for your condition.

What are your gains? Count them

and be wise. You have exchanged contentment for care, and innocence for guilt. Are your ships upon the ocean freighted with all the treasures of the east? Every wind that blows chills you to the very soul; name a rock, and you shudder: a shipwreck, and you are mad. Every element is your foe: water may rot, fire may consume, your merchandize: and bankruptcy, that haggard, lean and ugly monster, stares you in the face, lies down with you on your pillow, hovers round you in your dreams, sits at your table, mingles with your most familiar thoughts, and dogs you at every avenue of life. What's your resource? Poison or the pistol.—Dreadful alternative!

Have you houses?—There is not a night that you retire to rest without fearfully looking to the heavens to watch if their gloomy face reflect the red glare of some conflagration. Do you behold the flames ascend?—You rush out,

trembling with terror, lest your property be wasting in the fierce wrath of the destructive element. You run, you pant, you stagger : you arrive at the spot : no, it's not your dwelling ; it's your neighbour's : you compose your mind to peace, and return home weary, agitated and vexed : you go to bed and dream of the flight of tenants, repairs, arrears and ejectments.

Have you lands ?—Floods may bury them : blight and mildew may blast their produce : thieves may purloin it : negligence may corrupt it. The earth-worm and the little gilded insect are your foes : rains may rot your seed, drought may wither it : the parching north wind with its bleak wings may nip your vegetation ; and then, your hopes lie buried, and sorrow and disappointment prey, like a canker, on your mind.

Is your soul centered in the shining ore ?—How you tremble at the night-blast as it shakes your windows and

your doors. The faithful dog; the wakeful guard, the musket and the sabre are employed to secure your god from the prowling thief whose steps you hear in every noise, and whose anticipated depredations fill your heart with terror and alarm. Nor is this all. Your banker may fail : your debtor may abscond : your friend may deceive you : a thousand horrid ills flit round your imagination in threatening forms ; and every guinea you accumulate is one more secret fang planted in your heart to goad it into anguish.

Yes, ye men of wealth, from my soul I pity you. Condemned to toil in the path which you have falsely imagined to be that of happiness, you find nothing but care, anxiety and sorrow. Surrounded by all that profusion can command, you sit in the midst of your splendid heaps, like sacrifices gallantly adorned to be offered up to the deity you adore.

Oh **POVERTY**, thou delightful maid !
Friend of the virtuous and guardian of the
good ! You have deigned to be my com-
panion hitherto, and never never leave
me. In thy blest society I find that calm
oblivion of care and sorrow which poets
sing of, and to which philosophers teach
the way. The world is the poor man's
home, and heaven is his patrimony. His
mind is raised above all earthly disasters.
The fall of stocks, the failure of bankers,
shipwrecks, conflagrations, thieves and
debts have no terrors for *his* soul. *His*
banker can never ruin him : fire cannot
reach *his* property ; knaves cannot pur-
loin it : the sea cannot swallow it : nor
drought nor mildew can harm it. In the
rude conflict of evils which shock the
rest of mankind, he walks unhurt : like
a superior being he holds his course on-
wards, untouched by any calamity of
this earth, except so far as his sympathis-
ing heart may bleed for the sorrows
of others. The simplest fare, the plain-

est clothing, the humblest dwelling, satisfy his wants. He sleeps soundly: he has nothing to fear, for what has he to lose? He dreads no famine, for the earth will yield her roots and the spring its water: he harbours no suspicion against mankind, for they can gain nothing by him. Nor let it be accounted among the smallest of thy blessings, **POVERTY**, that thou art approached neither by the lawyer nor the physician. The courts of justice will not echo with thy name, nor the doctor's hand glitter with thy guinea.

Happy exemption!

From **POVERTY**, too, springs independence, the parent of all human virtue. To be truly independent of men, we must be independent of things and circumstances, and this we soon learn in thy school, celestial maid! He that can live without the aid of man, may defy his malice and smile at his wrath: he may despise his follies and condemn his excesses.

He, too, that is poor has nothing to dread from flattery. For him TRUTH will leave her well, and greet his ears with the accents of her melodious voice. The meanest human spaniel will not lick the hand that cannot pay for fawning.

No knave will cheat, no woman will deceive, no false friend will betray you: no temptation will beset you, nor will hypocrisy put on her mask to win you to her snares. By the world forsaken, and the world forsaking, you will be permitted to walk, at your own pace, and in your own way, "to that bourne whence no traveller returns." And when you die, no seeming sorrow shall shed tears over your grave, nor shall malice spit upon it with unholy scorn. No greedy and impatient heirs shall tear open your will, to praise you for your bounty, or to curse you for your stinted boon. And yet, though thou shalt live thus unnoticed, and die thus unhonored and unlamented, there shall come a day, perhaps,

when more glory shall encompass thee,
than if thou hadst walked thy course
with princes, and gone to thy grave
with all the pomp which the solemn
mockery of woe could lavish over thy
ashes.

Fair, but despised, maid, turn not
aside thy modest, glowing cheek while
thus I sing thy praises. I know the
language of commendation is a stranger
to thine ear ; but do not, therefore, sus-
pect my sincerity, because I have step-
ped aside from the crowd to do honour
to thy name.

THE
LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
PAUL PLAINTIVE, Esq.
&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

In which preparations are made for the birth of my hero—but preparations do not always end in success. The calamities of Ezekiel—a horse-pond and a gang of gypsies not the smallest disasters which he encounters, though the reader may think them bad enough.

THE clock had just struck twelve when Mrs. Dorothea Plaintive turned round in bed, and jogged her husband. Her reasons for so doing the reader will know if he goes on to the end of this chapter.

Ezekiel Plaintive had spent the even-

ing at his club ; had drunk somewhat more than usual, and had just fallen into his first sleep ; so it is not very surprising that he did not wake at the first jog. But Dorothea was not in a condition to be patient : she jogged again, called upon his name, and at last fairly pinched him by the ear till he awoke with the pain.

“ A legion of devils confound you,” exclaimed Ezekiel, with a voice of no common pitch ; “ that’s carrying the joke too far, Mr. Slab.”

“ Pshaw !” said his wife ; “ what nonsense are you talking about Mr. Slab ?”

“ My dear !” replied Ezekiel, rubbing his eyes and arranging his night-cap.

Ezekiel had been dreaming that he was in his club-room, where Mr. Slab, the glazier, was shewing a live crab, of extraordinary magnitude to the company ; and, affirming that it uttered a noise like the ticking of a watch, he was holding it to Ezekiel’s ear to satisfy his curiosity

just as his wife caught hold of it between the nails of her fore-finger and thumb, whence Ezekiel imagined, in his sleep, that it was Mr. Slab's crab which was giving it such exquisite pain; and hence his exclamation.

His wife, however, soon explained the matter, by telling him that she felt an aukward kind of a pain in her back, as if ———. But the reader should be told, first of all, that Mrs. Plaintive had been nine months in expectation of presenting her husband with an heir, and Ezekiel fervently prayed that it might be a male one. When, therefore, he heard Dorothea complain of her back, he sprang up in bed with an "adzooks," and began to grope for his stockings, and the other parts of his attire, that he might, forthwith, call in the obstetric aid of Mr. Leech, an officiating priest of Lucina, who had been regularly retained for the occasion.

Ezekiel rolled himself out of bed, and

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thrust one leg into his stocking, but drew it back again with a hideous roar.

“ Lord help us! what’s the matter,” cried his wife, as she bolted upright in bed, and put her two hands to her back, as if to squeeze up and strangle a sudden twinge that came there.

“ Matter enough,” replied Ezekiel with a piteous accent, and rubbing his great toe with a most expressive succession of sighs. “ I am wounded by some sharp-pointed instrument. I am sure I am : I feel the blood already.”

“ Heaven preserve us, marry and amen,” uttered Dorothea. “ Wounded, and with an instrument! What instrument? There must be thieves in the room. Pray Ezekiel strike a light : the tinder-box is on the table, and there’s a match on the chimney-piece, and the end of a candle in the dressing-glass drawer.”

“ Thieves !” said Ezekiel, “ pshaw, woman! what should a thief do with

my great toe ? Some confounded pin, or needle I suppose, has stuck in my stocking, and I verily believe has laid open my toe from top to bottom."

"Is that all?" rejoined Dorothea with great composure, while Ezekiel was collecting the various necessary implements by which to procure a light; and he had no sooner procured it than he began to inspect his wounded extremity; when, to his great amazement, he discovered no signs of blood, but only a small inflamed spot, as if from the puncture of a bee or a wasp. Upon looking into his stocking he found such to be actually the case: in the foot of it was a defunct wasp, crushed to death by Ezekiel, and to whom, in the moment of attack, he had given that display of his power which produced the above-mentioned hideous roar, and subsequent dialogue. It has served another purpose also; for my readers are thus indirectly informed that it was the summer

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time of year when that great event happened which I am about to relate.

When Ezekiel had applied a little tallow to his wound, and bound it up with a piece of rag, he began to think of the occasion of his being awake at that hour of night, and turning towards his wife, saw, by her countenance, that matters were not as they should be, so he huddled on his clothes, rang up the servant, and sallied out to rouse Mr. Leech from his quiet slumbers. But misfortunes never come singly ; a proverb which poor Ezekiel was destined to verify in the adventures of this night.

The reader should be informed that Ezekiel Plaintive lived in a small village in the north of England, and was an humble but industrious tailor. There was no man within ten miles of the place who could handle the shears, ply the needle, or use the goose with more dexterity than he did ; and he contrived, by assiduous labour ; and a pru-

dent frugality to make both ends meet tolerably well at the end of the year. He was employed by all the neighbouring gentry, and was universally praised for his punctuality and integrity. He kept a house, two journeymen, and one maid servant, and he only wanted, to complete his happiness, the very thing which this night promised to produce,—a child.

Mr. Leech lived at another village about two miles off, and Ezekiel, full of tender anxiety for the condition of his dear spouse, resolved to reach it by a shorter road which led across some fields, and one or two private gardens; but it was night—he hoped to commit the trespass unperceived; and he was quite sure that it might be forgiven in consideration of the motive. Accordingly, he struck out from the highway, about a quarter of a mile from his own house, and hastened along with as much alacrity as hedges and ditches would let him,

Our wisest and best purposes are sometimes frustrated by the use of injudicious means, and so it was with Ezekiel. Had he pursued the regular and beaten path, he would certainly have arrived at Mr. Leech's sooner than he could now do, by having manifold obstructions to overcome. He was not very expert at leaping ditches, or at climbing walls, nor had he a very accurate notion of the topography of his route. He proceeded onwards, however, with unabated ardour, reckless of two or three severe blows on his shins, by coming in contact with the stumps of trees, and some unpleasant lacerations from quick-set hedges, together with the loss of one flap of his coat, which he left dangling upon a rusty hook, that projected from some palings which he manfully overleaped.

These, indeed, were evils, but they were such as he patiently encountered in so good a cause. It is true, he could

not help groaning as often as he broke his shins or tore his flesh; but, as Zanga says, and as Ezekiel might have said, if he had ever heard of Zanga or his speech,

Sighs and cries, by nature grow on pain,
But these are foreign to the soul: not *mine*
The groans that issue or the tears that fall.

There is a point of human calamity, however, which overcomes fortitude, and Ezekiel found it. He had now traversed at least a dozen fields, and began, at last, to have some doubts, as to his being in the right way. At length he arrived at a low wall, which, however, the darkness of the night prevented him from perceiving till he had grazed the skin off his nose by running against it. "Adad," said he, holding his nose in his handkerchief, while his eyes ran over with tears, "I know I am right now. This is farmer Trumpington's wall, and there's his garden. I shall jump into a bed of his cabbages, I am afraid, but I shall not destroy above one or two, so here goes:" and

he leaped off the wall. But, to his great surprise, and extreme mortification, he alighted in a horse-pond up to his chin.

“ Lord have mercy upon me!” ejaculated Ezekiel, as he sunk into the watery element; “ where am I going to ? I am a sinner, and my wife will be delivered without a doctor !”

When he had somewhat recovered from his consternation, and found that he was not actually submerged, he began to think of his situation, and how to get out of it. But here another difficulty occurred. The heavens were covered with a pitchy darkness, and Ezekiel had no means of ascertaining either the extent or direction of the pond he was in. If he proceeded onwards in any way he might, perhaps, walk deeper into it, or there might be some pits or excavations into which he would fall, and he knew he could not swim. Sometimes he thought of remaining where he was till day-light, but then the idea of his

spouse's condition, and the fear of his own death, to say nothing of the woful situation in which he would have to await the approaching morn, strongly opposed that determination. He felt about for the wall, but it was not within the reach of his hands, and he was afraid to stir his leg lest he should sink into some bottomless gulph. Meanwhile, the water was gently distilling through his clothes, and communicating to him all the luxurious sensations of a cool bath in the heat of summer.

While he thus stood in this state of suspense he heard a rustling among the grass, by which he conjectured that he was no great distance from land, and presently after the sound of feet in the water. Ezekiel scarcely knew whether to rejoice or tremble at this adventure. However, he listened with great attention, while the steps approached nearer to him, and by their succession he knew them to be those of some animal. He

stretched forth his arms instinctively to ascertain, if he could, what it was, and he grasped something in his hand, which he found to be a cow's tail.

"Miraculous deliverance!" exclaimed Ezekiel with no common fervor of expression. "The cow will not remain here all night: she has only come to drink; and if I keep hold of her tail she will surely lead me out of my present jeopardy." So saying he took a firmer hold of the cow's tail.

Meanwhile, the cow anxious to cool herself, paraded up and down the pond with great deliberation; and Ezekiel followed her at her tail's length, but still with some degree of apprehension lest he should founder in some yawning pit. The cow, at last, having traversed the water in all directions, returned to the meadow, and Ezekiel, to his infinite delight, found himself once more upon dry ground. He wrung the wet from his clothes as well as he could, and stood

some moments to recover himself from the alarm which he had undergone. And now, unwelcome thoughts began to intrude themselves. He found that he had mistaken his way, and he knew not how to regain the right road. He pictured to himself the situation of Mrs. Dorothea Plaintive, without a nurse or doctor, and the tender alarm she would feel, when the time should elapse which it might reasonably have taken him to reach Mr. Leech's house. These ideas crowded upon his mind, and worked him up to desperation. He rushed hastily forwards, unconscious whither it would lead him, and would probably have continued to go on had he not been stopped by another wall.

The very sight of a brick wall was enough now to discompose the feelings of Ezekiel, for he thought of nothing but a pond on the other side of it. However, proceed he must, but he resolved to do it warily. Groping about, he

found a huge stone, which he dropped over the wall, that he might know, by the sound, whether it was water or land at the bottom, and he was satisfied that he should alight upon dry ground. Accordingly he bestrid the wall, and hanging by his hands, let himself down on the other side ; but he descended upon something soft, off which he rolled into the grass, and before he could recover himself, his ears were astonished by a hoarse rough voice, roaring out, like a peal of thunder, " D——n ! is the wall coming over us ? "

Ezekiel listened to this interrogation with terror ; and as he lay in the grass, uncertain how to act, and afraid to get up, he offered a silent prayer to heaven to bless him from the power of witchcraft, to which he now began to attribute his disasters. Meanwhile, the person who had thus emphatically saluted his descent, recovering from his surprize, began to feel about for the author of his

mishap, whom he conjectured to be at no great distance from him. In the progress of his search, he laid hold of Ezekiel's foot, and passing his hand up his body, seized him by the throat, while the tailor, almost convulsed with fear, offered neither to move nor speak. He lay under the sturdy gripe of his antagonist, like a lamb beneath the knife of the butcher. His limbs quivered like aspen leaves, his teeth chattered in his head, and the sweat burst from every pore of his body; nor did he fail to manifest his fear by other proofs which my delicacy forbids me to narrate.

The man whom he had thus unwillingly exasperated, was one of a gang of gipsies, who preferred, at this cool season of the year *molles sub divo carpere somnos*; and were scattered in graceful negligence over the field. One of them had selected, for his bed, the verdant turf, which was sheltered by a wall, and it was upon him that the unfortunate Eze-

kiel had descended. He now held him by the throat, and feeling his clothes all dripping with wet, and his nose being likewise assailed by no very savoury odour, he was at some loss to conjecture what animal he had caught.

“ Who and what the devil are you ?” said the fellow, as he shook him by the collar.

“ A master tailor,” replied Ezekiel, with much difficulty of articulation.

“ You are a nasty tailor, I’ll swear,” answered the gipseý as he held him at arm’s length. “ You stink like a polecat. Confound you ! what have you been doing ?”

“ Tumbling into a horse-pond,” rejoined Ezekiel with a mixture of fear and simplicity, which his detainer perceived, and resolved to turn to his advantage.

By this time they were surrounded by several men and women, who had been roused from their lairs by the noise of the rencounter ; and Ezekiel expected

nothing less than to be robbed and murdered. His disordered imagination magnified their number to at least a hundred, and wondering how they came there, he at last began to think he was tormented by devils ; but he soon found they were actuated by human passions.

The man who held him, quitting his grasp, told his companions in what manner he had been awakened ; and intimated, in a cant dialect, which Ezekiel could not understand, that he was a goose worth plucking. Accordingly, when he had finished his narration, they all exclaimed, with one voice, “ hang him on the next tree ; he’s no tailor, but some lurking constable who wants to give notice of our haunts : hang him up for the honour of our profession.”

When Ezekiel heard this tremendous and awful denunciation, he dropped upon his knees, and clasping his hands together, implored them for the love of mercy, and Christ’s dear sake, not to

hang him : " for," said he, " if you do, you may, perhaps, have three deaths to answer for."

" Explain, explain," exclaimed the whole gang at once.

" I will, your honours ; I will : " replied Ezekiel, gulping down a sob that was rising to interrupt his speech. " As truly as I'm a man, my name is Ezekiel Plaintive, and I'm a tailor ; and, moreover, my wife is with child—Lord help me ! perhaps I'm telling a lie, for mayhap it's all over by this time ; for I left my house at twelve o'clock, to fetch the doctor, Mr. Leech, and she was then crying out with her back most piteously ; and, meaning to take a short cut, I came across these damned fields, God forgive me, and have broke my shins, fell into a horse-pond, and am now going to be hanged. But, gentlemen, if you do hang me, you will surely be the death of my dear spouse, and her innocent babe ; and so heaven turn your hearts :---Amen."

As he uttered these words he burst into a flood of tears, which, however, had no effect on his audience : for after deliberating together a few minutes, they told him he was “ a canting liar ;” but that they would spare his life, if he would give them all he had about him.

In the apprehension of greater evils we are patient of less ones, and Ezekiel, who had been anticipating the horrors of hanging, was glad to compound for simple robbing. He emptied his pockets of all he had, which amounted to thirteen shillings and ten-pence, which he gave to them ; but with this they were not contented : they wanted his watch : luckily, however, he had left that at home ; they then searched him rigorously, and finding nothing else about him, they contented themselves with taking his coat, hat, and cravat, leaving him the rest of his apparel. In this plight they directed him to the village which he wanted, and dismissed him with a

volley of curses, and tremendous threats of vengeance, if he attempted to retrieve his losses by the aid of the law. Eze-kiel promised he would not, professed himself most agreeably satisfied with their liberal treatment; and bidding them good night, set forth upon his journey once more, blessing the providence of God that he had thus escaped from such a set of desperate villains.

CHAPTER II.

Fear produces strange effects.—The apostrophe of a disconsolate husband to his spouse,—which apostrophe, inspiring energy, leads to disasters which no man ought to experience in a good cause.—House dogs useful, but very inconvenient to travellers.

HE ran the length of two fields before he would venture once to halt, or listen whether he was pursued; for he was not certain how soon his adversaries might repent of their generosity, and perhaps set off after him to get his breeches and shirt. He stopped, at length, to recover breath, and to bethink himself of his multiplied disasters, all of which he might have attributed to one single cause, that of departing from the common road, and seeking an untried path. How many of the evils of life may be traced to the same source! Poor Ezekiel is not the only instance where misfortunes have followed a departure from the ordinary track, nor

the only one where discomfiture and disgrace have attended the ambitious design of accomplishing an end by unusual means.

But Ezekiel indulged no such moral reflections. He was more occupied with his own lamentable condition, and in removing some of the consequences of his recent fright, which he did with a few wisps of clean grass. While he was thus employed, his mind was reverting to the situation of his beloved Dorothea, whose name he thrice called upon, and thrice he sighed. Then he broke forth into the following apostrophe :

“ Oh! my dear spouse! little do you dream of the predicament in which your faithful husband now is. Perhaps, even now you are in extremity, and Sukey is listening out of the window for the sound of Mr. Leech’s mare, then running to my Dorothea, bidding her be patient, then arranging the baby linen, and then listening for me again. Perhaps its all over

by this time, and my wife without assistance: perhaps she is calling upon her Ezekiel: and here am I, in the middle of a field, robbed of my money, plundered of my clothes, and all befouled. But let me be gone: I cannot be far from Mr. Leech's house: and all may be well yet." So saying, he arranged his lower drapery, and set off at full speed.

By this time the first grey of the morning began to dawn in the east, and Ezekiel discovered, to his infinite chagrin, not the least appearance of the village where Mr. Leech resided. He looked behind, and beheld nothing but fields stretching in dusky perspective. On all sides of him were fields. He saw before him, however, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile, a small eminence, from which he had some expectation of discovering the wished-for bourn of all his labours. Labour, upborne by hope, travels cheerily onwards; for, as Cicero, has observed, *spes est expectatio boni*

futuri, and Ezekiel had quite reason enough to wish for future success, having found none hitherto. Accordingly, he hastened forward, and soon reached the top, whence, as he had anticipated, he beheld the village not far distant. This sight exhilarated his heart, and communicated new vigour to his motions. He descended with rapidity, and "scoured and stunk along" till he was stopped in his career by a gentleman's mansion and grounds. To go round the enclosure would have been the labour of an hour: but it would not be the labour of five minutes to get over the gate, and through the court-yard into the adjoining field. Anxious as Ezekiel was to save time he could not long deliberate which he would do. He freed the gate, and was hurrying along, half fearful of detection, when a huge house-dog, springing from his kennel, seized him by the hinder part of his breeches, and held him fast. "Adad," said Ezekiel, "I am caught again."

He *was* caught again, and not likely to get away ; for if he attempted to stir, the dog growled and shewed his teeth, which smote Ezekiel's heart with fear. Sometimes he tried to sooth him with caresses and encouraging words ; and sometimes he assumed a threatening manner ; but both were equally ineffectual : the mastiff kept his hold. The noise, however, which the dog and Ezekiel made together, awakened one of the servants in the family, who, looking out of the window, and seeing a man, in Ezekiel's plight, fast held by the animal, immediately gave the alarm in the house, not doubting that he was a thief. In less than five minutes the door opened, and three of the male servants, armed with staves, approached towards him ; at sight of whom, the dog, with admirable sagacity released his prisoner and retired to his kennel, as if conscious that his exertions were no longer needful.

Ezekiel hoped, by telling " a plain,

unvarnished tale," that he should be permitted to proceed without molestation : but he reckoned without his host. Menial arrogance was not to be so cheaply propitiated. They had an opportunity of testifying their own vigilance to their master, by their detection of a rogue, and they were deaf to all the remonstrances of Ezekiel, and to all his assurances, that he was a master tailor, and that his wife was in labour. They told him he was some dissolute rake-hell or infamous house-breaker, and that it was a justice to the public to bring such vagabonds to punishment ; that he must wait till their master was up, who would give orders for his being conducted before a magistrate, and they had no doubt they should see him transported at the next assizes. So saying they dragged him into a shed, where they locked the door upon him, while one of the triumvirate undertook to watch him till their master was stirring.

Here then we will leave the unfortunate Ezekiel for a while, who sat in a corner groaning and weeping, and return to Dorothea, and the events that were passing, meanwhile, in his own house.

CHAPTER III.

Further preparations for my hero's appearance, which, in due time, takes place.—Fears entertained for Ezekiel's safety.—The selfish condolence of Bob, and the sympathising sorrow of Scroggins.

As soon as Ezekiel had departed for Mr. Leech, all was hurry and confusion in the house. Sukey was sent here, and sent there, first to light a fire, then to put all the clothes in readiness, then to get out the spirits, and then prepare tea for the doctor. Meanwhile, Mrs. Plaintive continued to grumble and groan audibly, and impatiently awaited the arrival of the *accoucheur*. Her pains followed in quick succession, and promised to produce the expected treasure without much delay: so that it was a matter of some importance that Mr. Leech should be present, as Sukey knew nothing of such matters: no, that she did not.

One of the journeymen, who slept in the house, had also been dispatched for the nurse, who lived hard by, and soon returned with the sage and experienced dame, to the no small joy of both Sukey and her mistress. Mrs. Jenkins (for that was her name), proceeded to make the usual enquiries ; and prognosticated, from certain symptoms which she learnedly enumerated, that if Dr. Leech did not come forthwith, the babe would be born without his aid.

And just so it happened. Mrs. Plaintive tarried with as much patience and decorum as she could, and wondering greatly at her husband's delay, which she at first attributed to the circumstance of not finding Mr. Leech at home, and waiting to bring him to her ; but when at length day-light appeared, and Ezekiel appeared not, her terrors and resentment alternately prevailed. At one time she reviled him without much delicacy ; affirming that he had met with some pot companion, and that he was tippling in an

ale-house: then, immediately after, she would burst into tears, and declare that her dear husband had been way-laid and murdered, for nothing but death could keep him from her arms at such an interesting moment. This thought, at length, became the predominant one; and she wept and wailed bitterly, to think that the poor babe unborn would be fatherless, and she herself a widow. Mrs. Jenkins suggested that Bob, the journeyman, should be dispatched to Mr. Leech's house, by which means her fears would be quieted; and to this expedient Dorothea willingly consented. Bob was accordingly sent off, and ordered to use all possible expedition.

But the alacrity of Bob was fruitless. Before he returned with the doctor the great event had taken place: my hero was born and dressed when Mr. Leech arrived at the door of Ezekiel Plaintive; and he had only to prescribe a few draughts, *secundem artem*, for the necessa-

ry purpose of elongating his bill. He had been made acquainted, on the way, by Bob, of the strange disappearance of Ezekiel, and he thought it prudent not to alarm his patient's mind by disclosing the circumstance of his non-appearance. Accordingly, it was agreed upon between him and Mrs. Jenkins, who met him on the stairs for the purpose, that he should testify the arrival of Ezekiel at his house, and that he had been persuaded to finish his morning's sleep in Mr. Leech's bed, whose wife happened to be from home. But when Dorothea heard this, all of which she firmly believed, she could not help exclaiming, "A lazy brute: he had better be on his shop-board at work : or here to comfort me." The circumstance, however, did not much affect her spirits ; for she shortly after fell into a sound sleep, and snored aloud, to the great gratification of Mrs. Jenkins and Sukey, who were anxious to have a privy conference over a glass of *jackey*, about the singular absence of Ezekiel.

They were seriously alarmed at the business, and called in the grave counsels of Bob, the journeyman, who having first wetted his whistle with a glass, spoke to this effect.

“ I’ll tell you what, nurse, and I’ll tell you what, Sukey, the thing is as this here: there’s never a soberer man in all this parish than my master; and as to mistress saying as how he is tippling, it’s all dick-ey, do you see: for why, the matter’s as plain as the white in my eye. Old Zeeky, as we calls master in the shop, abominates drinking in a morning, and so do I, for it muzzies one all day: however, nurse, here’s to you; Sukey, my dear,” chucking her under the chin, and winking with his left eye, for his right had been poked out by his late wife in a drunken fray, ten years ago, and he now wore a black patch to cover the cavity; “ here’s to you, Sukey; my stomach feels cold, so I’ll venture upon a drop more,” and he drank off a bumper,

after which Mrs. Jenkins and Sukey followed his example.

“ So, as I was saying,” continued Bob, “ it’s all nonsensical for to be thinking as master has stopped by the way for to tippie: no, no. I knows how the account stands better, I fancies, than any of you ; my name is not Bob Linkstink if I cannot tell where master is at this very moment, as one may say. He’s murdered, and robbed, and thrown into a ditch.”

“ Christ forbid !” exclaimed Mrs. Jenkins and Sukey both at once.

“ So I say,” rejoined Bob ; “ but if it is so, it is so ; and it argufies nothing to be talking about it. Such things will happen to the best of men sometimes : and to be sure we all owe heaven a death, and he’s a good paymaster that pays before-hand. Master is murdered, that’s for certain.”

“ Speak low, for thy life’s dear sake,” said Mrs. Jenkins, as she drew nearer to Bob on one side, and Sukey on the other.

"If mistress should hear you, it would be the death of her; and if it is so, what will become of her, and this dear babe?"

"Aye, the business will all be at sixes and sevens, unless some clever fellow takes it in hand, and manages it for her; for a woman, you know, can't tailor; she could not go to measure our squire for a pair of buckskins; or to take orders of the parson when he wants his old black breeches turned and beautified: it would not do you know; but what then? there are those that can: clever fellows who have been brought up to the business, and who take to the needle as naturally, one may say, as our dog Prig does to the water; there's myself, for instance; I'm neither old nor ugly, I fancy; eh, Sukey? Mistress might marry a man worse savoured than I am, though I say it; and suppose we were to make a match of it, why then all would go on smoothly again, and this little fellow

should be christened Bob : as to master, he's gone for certain."

"I am afraid so," sighed Mrs. Jenkins, as she emptied out the gin-bottle.

"Leave us a drop, nurse," said Sukey, as she wiped a tear away with one of the lappets of her night-cap.

"After you, Sukey," rejoined Bob, as he adjusted the patch over his right eye.

There was now a pause for some moments, during which all the interlocutors were occupied in their own thoughts; but chiefly Bob was enjoying the anticipated honors of being a master tailor, and of leading another Mrs. Linkstink from the altar, "blushing like the morn." He already began to look upon the new-born son of Ezekiel with the eyes of second-hand affection, and had made up his mind to turn off his shop-mate Scroggins, as soon as he became master, for cheating him out of a pot of beer, when he was awakened from his agreeable reverie by Mrs. Jenkins, who asked him how he would be able

to ascertain if Ezekiel was really murdered?

“Why as to the matter of that, it will be easy enough to find that out; though, to be sure, I kept a sharp look-out, as I went along, into every ditch, and over every hedge, for I don’t know how it was, but hang me if I did not expect some such mishap; for as I came home last night, I heard a raven croaking most dismally on the stump of a tree in old Joe Jeffery’s garden. However, I’ll tell you what will be the best way: it’s now past eight o’clock; so, before mistress wakes, suppose I and Scroggins goes and looks about for master; we shall be sure to find him in some bye-place between this and Mr. Leech’s house: and then you know mistress can be told the worst on’t when she wakes.”

To this proposal both Mrs. Jenkins and Sukey cordially agreed, hoping however to find matters not so bad as they threatened; and Bob accordingly quitted the room to find Scroggins, who was al-

ready at work on the board. Scroggins, not being an inmate, was unacquainted with all that happened; and when Bob told him, he stared at him with eyes of astonishment. He rolled his quid from side to side with rapidity, drummed upon the board with his fingers, whistled half a tune, stuck his needle into his knee by mistake, and actually cut off the flap of a pair of breeches, at which he was working, without knowing what he had done. His consternation at length subsided, and he was able to listen calmly to the account of Bob, and to his proposal of going in search of their deceased master's body.

“ Seek him,” exclaimed he, leaping off the board; “ I’d seek him at the gates of hell, if I thought he’d got there. It will be a heavy day with me that sees his death. I love him as I should my own father, if I had one; for he has been a father to me: now the Lord forbid that he should be murdered !”

As Scroggins uttered these words, he

burst into tears. He was an honest, faithful and grateful creature; he had been left an orphan, and must have gone to the workhouse, if Ezekiel, who knew his parents, had not taken him to his house, and taught him his business. He had not forgotten the kindness, and his heart was now sorely afflicted at the thought of his master's death. He had all the rough manliness of generosity, without its hypocrisy. He felt that he was indebted to the philanthropy of his master, and grieved sincerely at the apprehension of any mishap that had befallen him. Bob was a different character. His nature was purely selfish. In all the accidents of human life, he was affected by them only as they affected him. If a man's horse ran away with him, he would try to stop it, simply in the hope of being rewarded with half-a-crown; and he once refused to help a man out of a river, till he had bargained for five shillings as the recompense. In

the present case, also, he was greatly buoyed up with the expectation of finding his master murdered, that he might succeed him in trade, and marry his widow.

They both set off, however, upon the expedition, and in their progress through the village, diffusing the intelligence of Ezekiel's being murdered, and their intentions of searching for the body, they were soon joined by many others, so that the procession amounted to nearly forty individuals, whom we will leave upon their journey, and return to the unfortunate object of it.

CHAPTER IV.

Ezekiel liberated, and accommodated with fine apparel—Sets off for his own home—In danger of being disowned by his own journeymen—Reaches his village in triumph—His reception with his wife.

As soon as Ezekiel heard the key turned upon him, he sat down upon a hog-trough, which was in one corner of the place, and resigned himself to all the luxury of grief. He cursed his fate a thousand times, abused the horse-pond, and damned the gypsies: nor was he sparing of his execrations towards the dog, who had been the cause of his present condition. He sat shivering in the remnant of his apparel, which was yet only half dry, and awaiting the issue of his detention with no common anxiety. Sometimes, as he heard his gaoler pacing up and down, on the outside of his door, he thought to move his compassion by pathetic entrea-

ties; but he feared, by so doing, to give an appearance of guilt to his intentions; and, for the same reason, he would have forbore to offer him a bribe, even had the gypsies left him enough to do it with. At length, he resolved to resign himself patiently to his fate: he was very certain he could prove his innocence; and, in the contemplation of his own calamities, he had partly forgotten the situation of Dorothea, and the original object of his expedition.

Meanwhile, the gentleman on whose premises he was detained a prisoner, and who was an early riser, had no sooner rung for his valet, than the whole business was disclosed to him, which he heard with a mixture of doubt and surprise. The assertions of the servants, however, were so confident, that he could not help placing some belief in them, and he accordingly ordered the delinquent to be brought before him. This order was soon executed. Ezekiel was led from his prison-house, but not before they had taken the precaution to

tie his hands behind him. In this plight, without a hat, a neckcloth or a coat, the rest of his habiliments disfigured by dirt and wet, his nose broken, and his hands secured, while his countenance exhibited nothing but terror and despair, he looked more like a lunatic than a thief.

When he appeared before the gentleman, he fell suddenly upon his knees, and with a most ludicrous expression of woe in his face, protested his own innocence. He declared, that in crossing his yard, he had no other intention than to shorten his road, and that as to being a housebreaker, he could bring very good witnesses to prove that he was a house-keeper; that he never wronged any body of a sixpence in his life, so truly as he hoped to be judged hereafter: and if his honor would only hear his story, he would be convinced that he was a most unfortunate man.

The gentleman, who had sagacity enough to perceive in his whole demeanor, that he was no knave, desired

him to rise, and disclose the cause of his present condition. Ezekiel accordingly arose, and, after a few preparatory hems, he recapitulated the whole of his adventures as already detailed to the reader; and he did this with such an air of simplicity, and with such evident sincerity, that the gentleman could not withhold his belief; and even his accusers began to think him innocent, though they were sorry to be disappointed of a journey to the next market town, where the magistrate resided, and of the importance which they would thereby acquire. When Ezekiel had made an end of his narration, the gentleman humanely cautioned him against venturing to trespass upon private grounds, from any motive whatever, as it might not always be easy for him to testify his own innocence; and besides he might happen to fare worse in the jaws of a house-dog, than he had this time done. He then desired him to go down into the kitchen and take his breakfast, after

which he might depart. Ezekiel bowed to the ground, and with a thankful heart left the room.

When he arrived in the kitchen, the rest of the servants crowded round him to hear his strange and manifold adventures; and Ezekiel's mind was now so light, to think he had thus happily escaped from the fangs of a constable, that he became quite mirthful, and related his disasters with such a comic *naïveté* of manner as convulsed his whole audience with laughter, from the butler down to Joey the groom. Mr. Whipcord, the coachman, was of opinion that it would make a very pretty tale, to be printed and sold for a penny: but Jenny, the house-maid, who had read Valentine and Orson, and the Seven Champions of Christendom, said she saw nothing in it so very particular or monstracious. They all agreed, however, in pitying the condition of his spouse; and the women servants separated from the circle in order to prepare break-

fast, that Ezekiel might set off for his own house.

Meanwhile, the coachman and groom held a consultation about providing Ezekiel with some apparel, which might help to cover his nakedness ; and in this design they were joined by the rest of the servants. After some rummaging, they produced an old cocked hat, which had been once trimmed with silver lace ; but that had been torn off, and sold long ago, while its rusty hue proclaimed the services it had performed ; an old livery coat was also brought forward, which had belonged to the late porter, who was a man of no common height or corpulency, and might have been divided into three of Ezekiel's bulk and stature ; this, together with a waistcoat, belonging once to the same wearer, they put upon Ezekiel, who exhibited a most ludicrous figure thus accoutred. The coat reached to his heels, and when he wanted to put his hand into the pocket, he was forced to

stoop down as low as the ground, in order to find it : the sleeves hung upon him with such copiousness of extension, that another man might have slipped into them without any inconvenience to either party : the flaps of the waistcoat reached to his knees, and it buttoned round him so easily, that there was a cavity between his belly and the lining, into which a peck loaf might have been easily introduced. To complete his figure, the cocked hat was placed upon his head, one side of which hung upon his shoulders like that of a London coal-heaver ; and Joey tied a dirty, ragged silk handkerchief round his neck to supply the place of a cravat. Thus equipped, and seemingly quite unconscious of the appearance which he displayed, he sat down to breakfast, with many expressions of gratitude to his benefactors. They, whose original purpose was not, indeed, to make mirth of him, but to repair, in the best way they could, his losses, were now una-

ble to refrain from laughter, which Ezekiel attributed to their recollection of his adventures, and very innocently joined with them in their hilarity.

As soon as the repast was over he prepared for his departure, the gentleman of the house having sent him down a guinea to replace what the gypsies had stolen from him. Ezekiel received the gratuity with thankfulness, and having reiterated his acknowledgments to the servants for their bounty, he set off, in triumph, with his cocked hat, and livery coat and vest. He had about three miles to travel, and he directed his course homewards, as he thought it quite superfluous now to complete his original purpose of calling upon Mr. Leech, for he made up his mind that Dorothea was delivered long before. As he jogged along, musing upon the strange adventures of the preceding night, he began to console himself with the idea, that he had not made a bad job of it, as he could alter the coat and waistcoat into

two of each, and besides, he had got a guinea instead of thirteen shillings. These reflections were very comfortable to him, and when he had indulged them long enough, and had stopped to take a more accurate survey of his new apparel, he began to think of his wife, and conjecturing what she had brought him, a boy or a girl? The thought was ecstasy. "A boy," said he, snapping his fingers, and skipping up in the air; "adad, it must be a boy."

In the midst of this anticipated rejoicing, he saw a man before him, who was gathering blackberries out of a hedge, and very deliberately eating them. As he approached nearer, he was struck with astonishment and terror: for he beheld, on his back, the very coat, of which he had been robbed the preceding night. This was a most unwelcome discovery to Ezekiel, for he had no doubt, from his appearance, that he was a gypsy, and one of the gang who had plundered him;

and he had as little doubt, that the whole body were within call. He was alarmed lest they should think that he had watched them ; and, to be revenged, as well as to escape detection, they would now perhaps murder him. Whether to stand still, go on, or run back, was what he did not know : but while he was deliberating, the fellow approached nearer, and Ezekiel, summoning courage from despair, boldly proceeded. In his fear he had forgotten that it was dark when they rifled him, and that they could have no knowledge of his person, though he had a very precise knowledge of his own coat. However, as he passed him, he hoped to conciliate his dignity, by submission ; and taking off his cocked hat, he made a very low bow, which the man perceiving, and noticing Ezekiel's singular appearance, thought him some poor lunatic, and heeded him no further. The tailor was afraid to look behind for some time, and when he did, was rejoiced

to see nothing of the enemy. "A narrow escape," he exclaimed, wiping the sweat from his fore-head with the long cuff of his long coat.

He had not travelled above half a mile further, when he saw a multitude of persons approaching, whose motions were very singular and irregular. They stopped every moment to examine all the hedges and ditches, and sometimes they disappeared in some adjoining field, whence they issued after a few minutes, and then came onwards, still using the same vigilance of search. Ezekiel could not comprehend the meaning of what he saw, but hastened forwards, that he might meet them and understand the mystery. He little dreamed that this assemblage of persons was the identical procession, headed by Bob and Scroggins, who were seeking about for his dead body ; and as little did they dream that his living body was advancing towards them.

When Ezekiel had approached within twenty yards of the train, he distinguished his two journeymen in the van ; and was greatly incensed that they should neglect his business to join a strolling rabble in their idle diversions ; and he was preparing to accost them in no very ceremonious manner, when Scroggins, who never suspected that it was his master before him in such a trim, hailed him with, " Ho, old 'un, you have not seen a dead man, as you came along, have you ? "

" You lazy, skulking son of a b---h," cried Ezekiel in a rage, thinking that he was deliberately insulted by his pretending not to know him ; " why an't you at your work ? and you," pointing to Bob, " what do you do here, you glouting scoundrel ? "

" Eh, old man," rejoined Scroggins ; " keep a fair mouth, if you can. I ax'd you a civil question, and I expects a civil answer."

" A civil devil," exclaimed Ezekiel

with increased fury; "have you finished the plush breeches of Alderman Gobble, that were to go home this morning by eleven o'clock?"

As Scroggins heard this, his eyes opened to a perfect circle, and he stared at the tailor with a look of amazement and consternation which no language can describe: then, retreating back, step by step, he muttered between his teeth, "why, Lord now, how did you know about Alderman Gobble's breeches? Are you a cunning man? Because if you be, mayhap as how you can tell us about master; where his body is, if he be dead; or where it is, if he be living. Do now, will you? for you look like a conjuror;" and still he kept edging himself among his companions, as if unwilling to trust himself within the reach of the supposed wizard.

By this time Ezekiel began to have an inkling of the whole business; and, in order to make himself known, he took off

his cocked hat, and elevating himself upon his toes, he called out to Scroggins, with a loud tone of voice, "who am I?"

"That I can't tell," said Scroggins drily; "mayhap you may be the devil, thof your feet are not cloven; but you look like a magicianer, who have conjured another man's coat and waistcoat on your own back, to shew your black arts."

"Don't you know me, Scroggins," said Ezekiel impatiently. "No, that I don't; but you seem to know me, for you have got my name pat enough, that's for certain."

Ezekiel was now in a fair way of being disowned by his own family; if one of the mob, who was less under the dominion of terror than Scroggins, had not stepped up, and taking him by the hand, exclaimed, "but I know you, master Plaintive, as well as he that made you, though you are a little transmuggrified with that there coat, and thingumbob hat. We have been in a main fright about you, thinking as you

had been murdered; and so we had come, out of pure kindness, to find your corpse, that it might be buried in a christian-like manner. But I am desperate glad to find you alive, that I am, so tip us your hand."

During this address, Scroggins had been examining the face of Ezekiel, in which he at length began to trace the features of his master, whom he now welcomed with demonstrations of such sincere joy, that all his former incredulity was forgiven; his eyes bore testimony to the feelings of his heart: while Bob, who saw all his ambitious hopes of becoming a master tailor, and of leading another Mrs. Linkstink from the altar, overthrown in a moment, advanced with a sulky look, and congratulated his master upon his return. Meanwhile, the other members of the assembly were expressing their curiosity to know what had befallen Ezekiel, and why he appeared before them in so singular a garb. To explain all this, how-

ever, was not the labour of a moment : so while they walked leisurely homewards, Ezekiel entered into a complete history of his preceding night's adventures, at which they laughed heartily, as well as at his flowing coat and waistcoat, and his fierce cocked hat. He only wanted the addition of a tie-wig, to have exhibited an appearance, which not even the pencil of a Hogarth could have justly delineated.

When they were within a mile of Ezekiel's house, Scroggins proposed to set off first, that he might prepare Mrs. Plaintive for his arrival, and to this her husband prudently assented. The reader will easily believe that the news of his safety was no unwelcome tidings to Mrs. Jenkins and Sukey ; but Dorothea, who yet knew nothing of what had really happened, was prepared to ring a peal in his ears as soon as he should appear before her, thinking him little better than a lazy, unkind varlet, who had been sleeping all the while at Mr. Leech's house, instead

of minding his business or comforting her.

Meanwhile, Ezekiel and his train approached the village, and as a snow-ball in its progress will surely gathers now, so does a mob multiply itself. Long before they arrived at their place of destination they were joined by all the idle people in the place, and no inconsiderable collection of boys, who seeing Ezekiel surrounded by such a multitude, and in such a grotesque garb, shouted, as they went along, "The conjuror, the conjuror;" the women ran to their doors, the dogs barked, the pigs squeaked, the geese cackled, and Ezekiel heartily wished that he was safely sheltered in his house. He had not long to wish. He soon arrived there, and without any ceremony bolted in, as glad to escape from the tumultuous honors of a mob as a patriot whom a rude rabble are preparing to carry on their shoulders.

Mrs. Plaintive could not conceive the cause of the uproar which she heard;

but her astonishment was soon increased when her husband presented himself before her, exactly in the trim which has been already described. He would have rushed into her arms, and imprinted her dewy lips with a fond kiss; but she, not immediately recognizing him, and thinking him some insolent intruder, bestowed such a hearty thwack upon his left ear, as sent him reeling to the other end of the room, and knocked his cocked hat into a certain utensil which shall be nameless.

"You saucy fellow," said she; "how dare you come into a lady's bed-chamber? What business have you in the house at all, you rascalion? Here Bob, Scroggins; come and turn this viggerbond out, or I shall be ravished."

"Lord, Ma'am," said Mrs. Jenkins, who was in the room; "why sure you don't know your own husband."

"I think not, indeed, nurse," rejoined Ezekiel, rubbing his ear; "but, ecod, I know her."

"Husband! quotha," exclaimed Dorothea; "why, nurse, nurse, you are mad."

"Not so mad as you, my dear," answered Ezekiel, approaching cautiously towards the bed, "to deny your own flesh and blood as one may say. Why now, don't you know my voice; and an't I the father of that there little one?" pointing to the infant, who was asleep by the side of its mother.

By this time her recollection began to return, and she was able to recognize her liege lord and master, whom she did not fail to salute with a sufficiency of invective for his absence, and of ridicule for his present appearance. After the storm had subsided, for Ezekiel had wisdom enough not to contend with an enraged woman, without vigor effectually to controul her, she listened patiently to his account of himself, and was not altogether unmoved at the various perils he had encountered. When he had finish-

ed, he was permitted to approach and give her a kiss ; after which he eagerly inquired after the bantling, desirous to know what he had got. Hearing it was a boy, he capered about the room with surprising agility, and actually went to his bureau and took out a shilling, which he gave to Mrs. Jenkins as a token of his gladness. His next care was to change his dress, to put a plaister upon his nose, and to see that Scroggins finished Alderman Gobble's breeches ; all of which being done, he reposed himself in an arm chair by the side of Dorothea, muttering every now and then, " Adad, I shall remember his birth-day."

Some readers may perhaps blame me for having entered thus minutely into the events which attended the birth of my hero. But their blame would be without foundation. Who is there that does not delight in learning even the most trivial circumstances that are connected with the history of great men ? To the phi-

losopher and the moralist, such details are of inestimable value: for *they* often see in them the causes of events of great importance. The little deeds of little men may be suffered to sink into oblivion; but the little deeds of great men deserve a more illustrious notice. I confess that I should like to read an account of all that ever occurred at the births of Julius Cæsar, Alexander, or Pompey; and if the power of resuscitating the dead were bestowed upon me, methinks I should sooner awaken their nurses or their boyish companions, than themselves. He who calls such things trifles, is himself a trifler, and knows but little of human nature. Thus much in my own defence.

I doubt, however, if there has ever happened such a concurrence of singular circumstances as attended the birth of my hero: by which it is plainly shewn that he was destined to act a conspicuous part in the great drama of life and

upon the huge theatre of the world. A truth which the reader will be willing to acknowledge when he has got to the end of this work.

CHAPTER V.

Happiness not the lot of man—One evil generates another—A family contention—Skilful generalship—Subsidies—My hero christened Paul.

ALL things now went on as smoothly and as prosperously as could be wished. Mrs. Plaintive mended rapidly, the boy grew plump and healthy; and Ezekiel, cured of his wounds, visited his club as usual, and made two decent coats and three waistcoats out of the apparel which had been bestowed upon him. The fame of his adventures spread far and wide; and many a night was he called upon by the president of the village club, to entertain the company by a detail of them.

Towards the end of the month, however, this agreeable harmony was in imminent danger of being interrupted by the discussion of the momentous question of the child's christening. Dorothea was

for having the parson at home, in which resolution she was strenuously supported by Sukey and Mrs. Jenkins; while Ezekiel thought it just as respectable and certainly more economical to go to church, in the wisdom of which measure both Bob and Scroggins concurred. The spirit of party began to operate, and discord flapped her wings in expectation of the coming fray; when Ezekiel, who was a man of some discretion in conjugal matters, wisely yielded to his wife's desires. But every difficulty was not overcome by this conciliatory measure. Another and a more solemn question arose—What was to be the child's name? Mrs. Plaintive, who had some notions of gentility, said, it should be George Frederic Augustus: but her husband objected to these names, because the boy, when he grew up would be proud. Mrs. Jenkins thought Thomas, a decent appellation; and its abbreviation *Tom*, was short and convenient, while

Sukey protested that *Tom* was vulgar, and begged that he might be called William.

“ William, you foolish hussey,” said Dorothea, in a rage ; “ do you think my son shall ever be called Billy, by all the boys in the village ? No, he shall be called George Frederic Augustus ; for Squire Bidborough’s eldest son is George, and his youngest Augustus, and Mrs. Proud’s nephew is called Frederic. But this babe shall have all these names, and then he’ll be equal to any of them there gentlemen.”

Ezekiel, who had set his heart upon having him christened Paul, knew the importance of auxiliaries ; and he had treated Bob and Scroggins to a pot of beer, on the day of this debate, upon condition that they stood by him in this great affair. But he employed stratagem also. He told his coadjutors the name he had fixed upon, and planned a scheme by which it should appear that they separately hit upon the same

appellation. Accordingly, when Mrs. Plaintive, after the above speech, turned to her husband, and desired to know what his opinion was ; he replied that he had made up his mind to have the boy called Paul : but Dorothea uttered a loud shriek, and had nearly fainted when she heard the horrid word.

“ Paul, husband ; Paul, Paul,” reiterated the astonished dame ; “ Paul, why you are mad ! ” and she looked at her husband with eyes that were expanded to the perfect oval of surprise.

“ Mad ! no madder than you, nor yet so mad, methinks. Paul is a very good name, a very decent, a very respectable name. Besides, it has belonged to our family for these three generations past ; and it would have been mine, only I was called after an uncle who left my mother twenty pounds when he died. Its a family name, and he shall be Paul.”

This was said with a resolute air and a fierce look, by which he hoped to intimidate his wife for once in his life ; but

Dorothea disdained to yield now who had never yielded yet. She insisted that the boy should have the three names already enumerated; and averred that Paul had a sneaking, methodistical sound, which, for her part, she could not abide: to all of which Mrs. Jenkins and Sukey cordially assented. When Ezekiel found that she was thus supported, he thought it time to call in his own reserved forces, and he accordingly proposed that Bob and Scroggins should be consulted upon the subject. With this Dorothea complied, and they were summoned to appear, one after the other. But, when she heard them both pronounce in favour of Paul, her patience was exhausted, and she gave up the contest in a pet, saying, "They might call him the *Devil's a---e a-peak* if they chose, but for her part she hated such low *mechanical* things." She then bounced out of the room, muttering, as she went, "Paul be d——d; a lousy, beggarly name."

Ezekiel, satisfied with his triumph, was not much moved by the ungracious manner with which his wife had given it up: but, lest she should return to the charge, he thought it prudent to weaken her power, by detaching her allies from the cause. For this purpose he slipped half-a-crown into the hands of Sukey and Mrs. Jenkins, as a subsidy; and they promised to range themselves under his banners should another engagement take place. Thus supported, he apprehended little danger of final success: nor had he reason to apprehend any, for Dorothea had a long fit of the sullens, during which she never once mentioned the child's name; and Ezekiel was politic enough to seize this interval of silence, and have the ceremony performed, which was accordingly done. the next Sunday evening, and the boy was called PAUL. Mrs. Plaintive turned up her nose with much contempt at the parson pronounced it, and that same night made a vow that there should be no

more children to break her heart, for she would never again admit Mr. Plaintive to the privileges of a husband. Whether she religiously kept this vow or not, I am unable to say ; but certain it is that Paul had neither brother nor sister : and Ezekiel was often observed to look with a most liquorish eye upon the girls of the village as they passed by when he sat at work, which he had never been wont to do before.

Thus, however, was the solemn and momentous question decided. Ezekiel was victorious ; and as success is apt to generate confidence, and confidence is the parent of arrogance, he, from that time forwards, made divers and sundry efforts to govern in all things : but his wife had too much of the woman in her to be ruled at all times : indeed he was not often so successful as he had been in the case of Paul, and which success he owed entirely to Dorothea's sullen mood.

CHAPTER VI.

The infantile progress of Paul—Is sent to school—What he does there—Sundry debates between his father and mother, whether he shall be a tailor or a GREAT MAN.

I CONSIDER it as unnecessary to trouble my reader with all the details of Paul's infancy, which differed in no respect from that of other children. He ate, drank, and slept just as others do: had the small-pox, measles, hooping-cough, and other infantile diseases; was sometimes thin, and sometimes fat; sometimes good-natured, and sometimes cross; sometimes clean and sometimes dirty. I have not heard even that he was distinguished by any thing uncommon during the first five years of his existence: none of those extraordinary circumstances which have heretofore signa-


lized the childhood of great men. Yet, I cannot help thinking that such things must have occurred, but he was not surrounded by persons qualified to observe, or eager to record, such prophetic circumstances. He was intended for a tailor, and nothing pleased his father so much as a strong inclination which he perceived in him to make pin-cushions, which he did to such an extent that he was able to supply all the little girls in the village with that necessary appendage of female economy. To foster this early predilection, Ezekiel granted him free and undisturbed access to *hell*. Start not, reader: the repository of all the waste pieces of cloth is so denominated by the stitching tribe; and from hence, perhaps, an ingenious antiquary might trace the origin of a well-known phrase, *the devil among the tailors*.

But what are the hopes of man?--Pleasing phantoms, which fill the eye, but

elude our grasp. We form them, and they perish : we are eager to taste them, and they are poison in our veins. Old hopes decay, and new ones arise, still to gild the path of life ; and man walks onwards, surrounded by the motley train, thinking them substantial, but finding them fleeting as the rainbow, and brilliant as its hues. Yet, what were existence without this delusions ? Who has a heart so firm, a mind so bold, a judgment so calm, that he could venture to strip the business of the world of all its deceitful trappings, and look upon the nakedness of things ? No one. It is a task beyond the powers of the children of earth. Such being the case, we must not be surprised then to find Ezekiel indulging in feelings so common to mankind, and anticipating the day, when Paul would exhibit himself, as a master tailor in the metropolis, and perhaps keep his coach, as master tailors have done before now. He resolved he should want no requisite to this desirable

end, which instruction could supply; and he determined to initiate him into the mysteries of the goose and sheers, as soon as he should attain his tenth year.

Dorothea, indeed, did not much approve of this plan. Her thoughts towered higher. She would have had him brought up to the church or the bar, that he might some day become archbishop of Canterbury or lord chancellor of England. She was sure the boy had *genus*, and it was a pity not to give it its proper direction. She was certain he would shine at speech-making; for even now in his sixth year he would talk, for an hour at a time, to the water-tub that stood in the yard. This indeed was true, and Ezekiel had noticed it: but then, he had sagacity enough to know that Paul might be a tailor, and yet an orator: modern times, indeed, give us proof of this. An attention to tape is very compatible with declamation; and a man may be a good judge of flannels, and yet understand the



index of the history of England. To talk is one thing, to reason another: and men will talk, who cannot reason.

Matters, however, went on in their usual course for a year or two longer. Paul was sent to a school which was kept by an old woman, who was perfectly deaf, and of course admirably well qualified to endure the noise of a congregation of apple-munching urchins, without inconvenience. It was her boast, however, "unruly brats with birch to tame," and to teach them to spell and read. Had Demosthenes been favoured, in his early years, with such a tutor, he would have been absolved from the necessity of haranguing on the sea shore, when the waves were in their loudest commotion, to accustom him to the clamors of a popular assembly, for each member of this little academy, was compelled to elevate his voice to no ordinary pitch, when he read or spelled before the sage and venerable matron. Paul, indeed, acquired such

a shrill and expressive scream, that when at home, he was no inconsiderable annoyance to his mother, especially when addressing the said water-tub. At the end of a twelve-month, however, he had made such progress in his studies, that he was able to spell any word in four syllables, though he could not always pronounce it afterwards ; but, as his father could pronounce it, though not able to spell it, they contrived, together, to travel through a paragraph in a newspaper sometimes, or on a Sunday evening a chapter in the Bible, to the great edification of Mrs. Plaintive, who listened with exemplary patience to their conjoint efforts. Ezekiel was so well satisfied with his son's progress, that he resolved to continue him another twelve-month with his school-mistress, after which he was removed to another school, kept by the clerk of the parish, for the purpose of having his education completed.

Here he was taught writing and arith-

metic, as well as spelling and reading, and even Latin (that is, to decline *musa* and conjugate *sum*): for which last acquirement Mrs. Plaintive paid out of her private purse, for she was determined at all events to make her son a *scholard*. Paul was not a very apt scholar, however; except in writing and reading, he made no progress in any other branch of knowledge. He preferred playing to study, and if any mischief was performed, Paul was sure to be one of the delinquents. He had, indeed, acquired such universal reputation, that he was often punished for what he had never committed, and he sometimes committed what he was never punished for. He had a great fund of opposition in his character, and nothing would so surely engage him in any scheme, as to tell him he dared not do it. In this way his companions often involved him in scrapes; and once, he nearly knocked Mr. Barnaby's eye out (that was his master's name) with the

half of an apple, to prove that he was not afraid to throw it. When discovered in any of his misdemeanors, he always bore the penalties with gloomy stubbornness, and generally received more stripes than he would have done, because no stripes could make him cry, and his master always measured the quantity of punishment to be inflicted by the number of yells which he could extract from the sufferer. Many were the complaints, which Ezekiel and Dorothea heard from apple-women, cake-women, and owners of orchards, all of whom had grounds of accusation against Paul. Barnaby endeavoured, all in his power, to correct this propensity to mischief and roguery, but it was in vain. Still, he could not help considering Paul as the brightest scholar he had: he began to read with much fluency, and to write with much celerity, and he spelled with great accuracy, so that he now became his father's factotum, kept his books, read the news-

paper to him, and wrote all his bills and letters. Dorothea felt all a mother's pride in this progress of her darling son, and still cherished the fond hope of seeing him a great man.

Affairs continued in this state till Paul had reached his tenth year, and then his father bethought him how he should proceed in rendering him of some use. By dint of his wife's importunities, he had somewhat cooled in his vehement desire of making him a tailor: but then, he could not very easily make him any thing else. To apprentice him to any other trade, would require a premium, and Ezekiel was poor: besides his productive labour would be thus enjoyed by another, for a series of years, during all which time Ezekiel would probably have to find him in clothes and washing. And, in addition to these considerations, there was another of equal difficulty. In the village where Ezekiel resided, there were but few master tradesmen who were able

to take an apprentice, and these were the baker, the butcher, the shoemaker, the carpenter, and the blacksmith. Now his wife had a violent antipathy to each of these trades. The baker was ungenteel, the butcher was bloody, the shoemaker was a snob, the carpenter worked out of doors sometimes, all winds and weathers, and the blacksmith, who was also a farrier, might have his brains kicked out by a horse. To each of these objections Ezekiel had something to oppose, but his wife was tenacious of her disgust, and her husband argued in vain. What then was to be done?—That which is often done in similar cases,—nothing. Paul was suffered to go on at his school, while Ezekiel and Dorothea nightly discussed the subject of his future destination.

While, however, they were wandering in the mazes of conjecture, and devising various methods of directing the subsequent course of his career, a circumstance

took place, which gave the direction to his after life ; but, as this was a matter of great importance, eventually, at least, it deserves a separate chapter for its narration.

CHAPTER VII.

A great literary character introduced—The progress of Caleb Inkhorn, Esquire, from a printer's devil to an author, together with various other pleasant matters.

MR. Barnaby, the aforesaid clerk of the parish, had a nephew in London, who was a great literary character. By a great literary character, I do not mean a man who does great things, but a man who does any thing: a man who is equally felicitous in poetry and prose, in history and criticism, in satire and panegyric, in pathos and humor, in morals and travels. These are the great literary characters of modern times: these are our living great men. *A helluo librorum*, is now a man who writes most books; not he who reads most. Indeed, reading is scarcely deemed a requisite; they leave that mechanical process to those who cannot write.

Caleb Inkhorn, however, had not yet arrived at this enviable pitch of eminence. He was retained by the booksellers to write, but as he had few ideas of his own, he was compelled to employ those of others; and of course he found reading a very profitable thing. The progress of Caleb had been curious, and is worth recording. Who his father was, has never been exactly ascertained, nor was he very solicitous to solve the mystery; though, after he attained to something like celebrity that honor was claimed by a tripeman near Temple-bar, and a muffin baker who resided not far from Drury-lane. His mother, however, was a decent sort of woman, and held a situation in one of our theatres, which produced her ten shillings a week. With this, and such other accidental earnings, as she could pick up, she contrived to support herself and her son Caleb. She gave him a decent education, and when he was about twelve years old, she ob-

tained him a situation with a newspaper printer, in the capacity of his *devil*: a term well known to great literary characters. The reader is aware, therefore, that Caleb can boast a more regular gradation of studies than falls to the lot of many of his brethren.


When he had exercised this calling for four or five years, during which his mother had to pay some pounds to the shoe-maker, he was raised to a post of more distinguished notice, and one in which he made a great noise in the world. This was a street herald, or horn-blower; one of those *gentlemen* * who sometimes

* If the reader fancies I am using a term here improperly, I must beg him to throw aside old prejudices, and accommodate himself to modern notions. Facts are stubborn things, and I will give one here, in support of myself. A few years ago the following advertisement appeared, "Wanted several gentlemen to be employed upon a daily paper: apply at such an office." Upon inquiry, these gentlemen were wanted to blow the horn in the street. *This is true.*

electrify the politicians of this metropolis with the sonorous peal of "Bloody news! bloody news! just arrived from France!" And Caleb was soon distinguished for the intonations of his horn, and the tremendous yell of his thorax. He might be seen with his spattered shoes, worsted stockings, parti-coloured breeches, ("what will not time subdue?") tattered vest and coat, that flaunted in rags, his locks matted with accumulated dirt, sweat and pomatum, his newspapers under his arm, his horn in one hand, and the other elevated to his mouth to assist the emission of his glorious tidings to all the profound politicians of ale-houses, coffee-houses, and private-houses, scow-ering along the streets of the metropolis, glad of a shilling, and eager to cheat for it by vending a paper of a week old. If the buyer detected the imposition, and turned round to expostulate, Caleb had vanished—he was rousing the peaceable inhabitants of some other street,

with his horn, and ready again to cheat, and again to fly.

Thus passed three more years of Caleb's life, during which time he was actuated by a laudable ambition, that "last infirmity of noble minds," to aspire beyond the vendor of news, and become the maker of it. During his long residence as *devil* and *horn-blower*, in a newspaper office, he had had various opportunities of observing the process; and at length began to think that he could write a paragraph, invent a murder or a rape, break half a dozen legs, overturn two or three chariots, set a house on fire, or make a lunatic cut his throat, with as much skill and probability as any other. He could also manufacture a lie, a tale of scandal, a lampoon or a libel, with infinite dexterity, and these are among the prime offices of a newspaper writer or editor. This consciousness, however, of his own powers, was only part of the business: and the smallest part: the principal



part was to find or make an opportunity of displaying those powers. Caleb no sooner felt this necessity, than he soon devised the means of accomplishing it. He was too ardent and enthusiastic, to wait, patiently, the progress of events : he panted for distinction, and resolved to abridge the tedium of delay.

Mr. Prim, who had the management of that department in which Caleb longed to signalize himself, was a man who freely indulged in drinking; and it was his custom always to regale himself with a glass of rum punch in the afternoon. This daily potation it was usually Caleb's office to fetch from a neighbouring ale-house, when he did not fail to lower the contents by sipping it as he came along, and afterwards to lower the quality, by supplying the deficiency with water. Mr. Prim used sometimes to complain, that they mixed the liquor very weak, but he never suspected that Caleb was his taster.

One day, as the latter was going for

this constant beverage, and ruminating upon his own ambitious schemes of forsaking the horn for the pen, he thought if he could, suddenly, and at a critical moment, disqualify Mr. Prim for proceeding with his avocations, a temporary opportunity might occur for him to step forward and offer his services upon the emergency thus artificially created. In order, therefore, to accomplish this, he paid for an extra portion of rum in the glass, which he was going for, and when he returned with it, Mr. Prim noticed the increase of spirit only with commendation, thinking the landlady had learned to mix better. One excess generally leads to another, as one glass of wine generally prepares the way for the next. So it was with Mr. Prim. He was so well pleased with the excellence of his liquor, that he resolved to seize occasion by the forelock, and, lest the benevolence of the landlady or her error, should experience a change, he dispatch-

ed Caleb for another noggin, and Caleb took care that it should rather increase than decrease in potency. By the time Mr. Prim had stowed this second cargo in his hold, his eyes began to twinkle with unusual vivacity, and his tongue acquired an added power of velocity. He whistled half a tune, talked to himself, walked across the room with a little obliquity of motion, simpered without knowing why, and, in short, did any thing but write, though the press was then standing still for the conclusion of a most atrocious and barbarous rape, which had been committed by a certain gentleman, of a certain family, upon the body of a certain young lady, and in a certain notorious place. But, the names of the parties were concealed from motives of delicacy. After a while, a prudent notion came into his head, that it would be well to provide for the morrow, and secure another glass of such *stiff stuff*, to regale himself

with, on the ensuing day. Caleb was accordingly dispatched a third time to the *Cock and Spectacles* for a third supply, and his pocket now began to feel the effects of his liberal additions to Mr. Prim's liquor. He laid down his last shilling for the extra portion, almost in the same gloomy state of despair as a gambler throws down his last stake with the hope of retrieving what he has already lost.

When he returned he found Mr. Prim sitting in his chair, with the pen in his hand and fast asleep. This was just the catastrophe, that he had been aiming to produce ; and he might have exclaimed, in a parody upon the lines in Hamlet,

Sleep rock thy brain,
And never write a paragraph again.

But as he had never heard of such a play as Hamlet, and if he had, might not have thought of this passage, he contented himself with saying, “ snore away

my hearty : here's another glass to glue your day-lights up if you awake ;" and retreated softly from the room, full with hope and eager for the event.

The men had been patiently waiting for copy in the office, and were now amusing themselves with their respective vocal exertions, when the proprietor of the paper entered the room, and stared with a look of astonishment to behold them all idle. When he enquired the cause, and heard that they were waiting for copy from Mr. Prim, he descended in a minute to that gentleman's room, and seeing him asleep, gave his nose a tweak, which would have been nearly sufficient to rouse a dead man from his coffin. Mr. Prim roared with no common power of lungs, and starting up from his chair, rolled along upon the floor like a log of wood ; for the liquor had so completely possessed itself of his faculties, that he was totally unable to stand. When his employer beheld him in this

beastly, enervated state, he deemed it useless to exert his authority, but left him there snoring and grunting, with great perseverance.

At this moment Caleb entered the room, as if to receive some order from Mr. Prim, but seeing him on the floor, he started back with well-feigned surprise, and exclaimed, with seeming terror, "Blow me tight! is Mr. Prim dead?" "Dead!" rejoined his master; "no, but he's dead-drunk: and at a pretty time of day too: when the paper ought to be gone to press, and there's a whole column to write. D---n the fellow, here's a rape not finished yet, besides a murder and a fire that he was to have provided. I can't do it myself if I would——." "Please you, Sir," said Caleb, seizing the very opportunity for which he had been wishing, and letting the carcass of Mr. Prim plump on the ground, which he had dragged half way into a chair, "please you, Sir, I think I could."

“ You !” rejoined his master, with a tone and look of infinite contempt; “ yes, Sir,” answered Caleb, not at all abashed by this contumelious exclamation of his employer. “ Why,” replied his master ; “ did you ever do a rape ; you ragged scoundrel ?” “ No, Sir,” rejoined our horn-blower; “ but what of that ? I know I could, if I were to try, and a murder too, and a fire : or a gallows cut-throat piece of news, at a push : I know I could, Sir.”

This was uttered with such a confidence of voice and manner, that his master’s incredulity was a little staggered, and entering into further discourse with him upon the subject, he found Caleb better acquainted with these matters than he could possibly have believed without such evidence. Accordingly he accepted of his offer ; and, that he might not feel embarrassed by his presence, he left him to himself, desiring him to conclude what Mr. Prim had begun, and to prepare

as many other articles as might suggest themselves, till there should be sufficient to finish the paper. When they were completed, he was to shew them to him before they were printed. So saying he quitted the room, and Caleb sat down at the desk with all that consciousness of ability, by which the greatest things are sometimes unexpectedly accomplished. There was no time for deliberation: so invoking all propitious powers in a silent prayer, he took up the pen, concluded the rape, provided a horrid murder on the borders of Epping Forest, and gave an affecting account of a boat that was upset between London and Putney-bridge, in which were a father, his two daughters, and three sons, all of whom perished. From a rough calculation, however, which he made, he found there was still about half a column to fill, and he luckily remembered that he had a poetical effusion in his pocket, which he had written the day before; this, therefore, he resolved to use,

glad of an opportunity to display his powers both in verse and prose. With the reader's permission we will introduce the poetry of Caleb, leaving his murder and other calamities to their undisturbed obscurity.

LYING DICK, OR DEATH AND THE DOCTOR.

An English ship (in desperate fight
With Gallic foes engaged,)
For twice two hours, an awful time,
The unequal conflict wag'd.

But victory crown'd the British flag,
Though purchas'd by the blood
Of many a brave and noble tar
Who for his country stood.

The fight once o'er, the surgeons then
O'er wounded bodies creep :
And those whom death had fairly caught,
They sentence to the deep.

One manly fellow on the deck,
Had felt the Gallic fire :
Disguis'd with blood, they scarcely knew
Poor Dick, nicknamed the LIAR ;

For truth from Dick's unsteady tongue,
Too rarely found the way ;
Whate'er he said, he boldly gave
Imagination play.

Him, motionless and stain'd with gore,
 The surgeon left for dead :
 And bade his comrades, standing round,
 Heave to his wat'ry bed.

They stoop, they raise the bleeding load,
 But life was not all gone ;
 Dick, roar'd aloud, " I'm only stunn'd,
 " You lubbers lay me down."

Amaz'd they stand, but knowing well
 Dick lov'd a *lying* jest,
 At once exclaim, " Why b——t your eyes
 The doctor must know best."

He had just finished copying this, when his master entered the room, with a sort of dubious expression on his countenance, which seemed to denote an expectation of disappointment. Caleb arose, and with much self-complacency, laid before his judge, the labours of his pen, who, having read them, not only approved of them, (and especially of the poetry), but ordered them to be immediately conveyed up stairs to the compositors, and presented Caleb with five shillings. Nor did the testimony of his

approbation stop here ; he inquired into Caleb's condition, examined him further as to his capacity, and at length told him that he might lay aside the horn, if he were so disposed, and assist Mr. Prim in his department, for which he should have a more liberal allowance of salary. Caleb bowed assent to this proposal, and his master left the room, desiring him to correct the proof when it should be ready, and to take care of Mr. Prim, who was still snoring on the ground.

Who might now compare with Caleb in happiness ? Who might not envy the self-complacency with which he reflected upon his scheme, and the singularly felicitous termination of it ? No general, who surprises the enemy by a well concerted manœuvre : no minister who obtains a majority against all probability : no stock-jobber who nets *cent. per cent.* ; no lover who finds his mistress in a yielding mood : no author who reads his praises in reviews : no patriot who sees a

subscription fast filling to pay his debts : no frantic reformer who inhales a vast effusion of stinking breath from the lungs of those who shout at the harangue they cannot hear : no political demagogue whom Newgate or the Tower sends forth to roaring mobs, who hail their egress ; in short, no human being, however great his happiness, or from whatever cause arising, could surpass the thrilling ecstasy of Caleb at his advancement. Splendid visions of future renown already flitted before his fancy : and, imagination blest, he revelled in the applauses that already seemed to attend his steps. His horn, one end of which projected from his breeches pocket, he indignantly drew forth, and glancing a look of ineffable contempt upon it, he bent it across his knee, and threw it out of window : the written placard which was, that evening, to have graced the front of his hat, bearing on it, in gigantic letters, the words " Important news just arrived—a

bloody engagement between the French and Austrians, &c. &c.," he tore into pieces and sent after the horn: he gartered up his stockings, wiped his shoes with his handkerchief, and smoothed his hat with his arm: arranged his neckcloth, and drank Mr. Prim's glass of rum-punch in wishing himself joy of his success. Notions of dignity now began to throng upon him: he ruminated upon a new suit of clothes, and other personal improvements corresponding with his present elevation.

While he was thus busily employed in meditating schemes of future elegance, Mr. Prim began to awake; the fumes of the liquor had spent their force, and he opened his eyes with astonishment at beholding himself extended on the floor. Caleb assisted him to rise, and as soon as he had sufficiently recollected himself he imparted to him all the events that had taken place, and the account of which sorely afflicted him. He cursed the rum-punch,

and abused the *Cock and Spectacles* with great acrimony, swearing that he would never again taste any liquor from that house. When he had thus amused himself with invectives for about half an hour, he begged Caleb to recapitulate all the circumstances, which he did with great willingness, and dwelling with emphatic earnestness upon his own labours. Mr. Prim did not delight to hear of these, and still less did he delight to reflect upon Caleb as his future coadjutor. There was no remedy, however, and he submitted silently to necessity.

Caleb was indefatigable in qualifying himself for his new duties. He made considerable acquisitions in second-hand knowledge, which he retailed in a new dress. He subscribed to a circulating library, and read all the reviews, from which he extracted a miscellaneous sort of information, which he dexterously applied to many purposes: he could talk of books which he never read, and pass

opinions, which he could not form. He studied the various ways of dressing a paragraph, and employed his imagination in devising circumstances, with great success: he even learned, by degrees, to discuss intricate questions of politics, and deal in shrewd conjectures upon the designs of ministers. He made himself familiar with the jargon of newspaper politicians, and wrote very learnedly upon the probable issue of a campaign, or the success of a negotiation. All the cabinets of Europe were open to his suppositions: and he could anticipate what was preparing, and prognosticate upon what was doing. Though the utmost extent of his reading was at this time the Annual Register, the monthly publications, the daily papers, and a few occasional pamphlets, he could investigate, very profoundly, the balance of power, the balance of trade, and the balance of parties: he could censure the financial schemes of a minister, and condemn the

illogical speech of a member: he could talk of *Magna Charta*, the *Bill of Rights* and the *Glorious Revolution*: call upon the country to defend the constitution, praise an impeachment, and abhor a pension; in short, he became a very useful person, and, as his arrogance was at least equal to his ignorance, and his impudence surpassed both, his coalition with Mr. Prim became, at last, so insupportable to the latter, that he voluntarily resigned his situation, and Caleb stepped into the vacant seat.

This transition from horn-blower to the sub-editorship of a newspaper, did not occupy above six months, so rapid was the progress of Caleb in the career of fame; and when he reigned without a rival, he seemed to feel the highest ambition of his soul gratified. But man is never satisfied with the present, and an enterprising mind thinks nothing done while there remains any thing to do. Caleb had now more leisure for reading, and more

means of procuring books. He began, therefore, to extend his knowledge, by reading two or three abridgments of the English history, some popular books of travels, and a few poetical works. These, together with his former course of study, which he still continued, and other accidental sources of information, soon made him an important person, and he became so conscious of his qualifications, that he bethought himself of applying to the booksellers. Before he adopted this proceeding, however, he wrote a work of fiction, composed during the intervals of business, of which he thought highly, and when finished he offered it to a publisher, who declined, indeed to accept it, but was much struck with the title-page, which was as follows : “ the Sense of Sensibility : a sentimental Series of Sorrows ; ” by “ Caleb Inkhorn, Esquire, professor of modern languages.”

This appendage to his name was what chiefly attracted the bookseller’s notice,

who, being about to publish a collection of voyages and travels, thought Caleb would be just the man to give a new translation of such foreign ones as had established their own reputation. An interview was accordingly solicited: Caleb attended: the proposition was made, and he accepted it without hesitation. But the reader may, perhaps, be curious to know how such a contract could be fulfilled by a man who knew no language but his own, and that very imperfectly. It is a question, indeed, which might excite the curiosity of any rational man, and its solution will excite his wonder, though he will be tempted to admire the invention of Mr. Inkhorn.

Caleb could form no conception of that delicacy which would prompt a man to decline an employment to the discharge of which he was incompetent. He thought it every man's business to detect a knave, but not a knave's business to detect himself. He saw thou-

sands in the world, who fattened upon the credulity of mankind, and thousands who lived by the practice of deception : they had formed no estimate of the value of character, and could have no terrors at the contemplation of its loss. To live by any means that laughed at the gallows, pillory, whipping, or transportation, was their aim, and it was Caleb's ; and when, therefore, the bookseller proposed to him a task, which he had no power of executing, it never once occurred to him to refuse it. The terms were stipulated, and his single determination was to get the money. When he dubbed himself a " professor," indeed, he did not exactly expect such an application, and the assumption of the title arose, rather from that vague and aimless vanity with which weak minds are apt to be affected, than from any deliberate intention of rendering it subservient to fraud. But he had not integrity enough to recede, from roguery when

the opportunity presented itself; so, in his way homewards, after having concluded the bargain, he pondered upon the means of escaping detection, and the plan which he adopted was this. Of the works which he was expected to translate, there had already been translations by different hands, but in too costly a form: these Caleb procured, and, sitting down, he copied them off, taking care to invert each sentence, and otherwise so to alter the construction of the language as to prevent the possibility of discovery. Such was the ingenious method he employed, and he triumphed, for a while, in the success of his plan, received his hire, and advanced another step towards the title of a great literary character.

During this period, however, he still continued his avocations as sub-editor, till he one day unluckily ventured to arraign the conduct of a distinguished nobleman, who had rendered most essential

services to the state, and whose whole course of life had been one unbroken series of great and good actions. The libel reached his ears, and he threatened to commence a prosecution against the proprietor of the paper; but he was at length appeased by a public recantation of the foul and infamous aspersion, and the dismissal of the offender. Caleb, therefore, who had vainly flattered himself that his assistance was indispensibly necessary, found himself suddenly out of employment, with nothing to subsist upon, but the scanty residue of his wages; for the bookseller who had engaged him in translating, soon discovered his fraudulent practices and turned him off without any ceremony. If one door, however, was shut, all were not shut; and, a man with impudence for his guide, will enter where a better man stands doubting on the threshold. He bustled up and down the town, from bookseller to bookseller, and from news-

paper-office to newspaper-office, till at last he engaged himself to a noted political demagogue, who wanted just such a man, and he wanted just such a master. Here he had liberty to rail without control, and no one escaped the virulence of his pen. All that was great, and dignified, and virtuous, in the nation, became, alternately, the objects of his abusive malice ; and while his employer reserved to himself the leading political discussions of the day, Caleb was at liberty to fill up the remaining space with any article he chose, so as they were neither liberal, rational, nor manly. The public, however, sickened at the repast which was prepared for them : the paper sunk into insignificance ; was at length abolished, and Caleb once more thrown upon the world to elect his future means of subsistence.

He now cultivated the notice of the booksellers more assiduously, and was at last engaged by one of them in a com-

pilation, which he executed so much to his satisfaction, that he was entrusted with other things. All indeed were alike to him. In the course of a few years he wrote three histories of England, one history of India, travels through China, and a voyage to the Levant; a history of Christ, and a system of geography; a farrier's dictionary, and a family physician; a farmer's encyclopædia, and a universal gazetteer, together with a gardener's calendar and a new system of chemistry. He had as many names as a felon at the bar of the Old Bailey, with half a dozen *aliases*. Sometimes he was the *Rev. Thomas Thomson*; then, *Walter Topham*, florist; sometimes he astonished the world with his learning as a plain *mister*, and sometimes as an esquire. In short, he assumed a different name with every work, and seldom used his own. Among other speculations he undertook to establish a weekly newspaper; but notwithstanding he employed

every art of puffing which modern times have invented or improved, and though he never failed to promise every thing that could captivate the fancy, improve the morals and enlarge the understandings of his readers, there were so few who were willing to be captivated, improved, or mentally enlarged, that his paper lived but to die, and he with difficulty extricated himself from the embarrassment which its failure occasioned. He contrived, however, to earn a very sufficient income by his numerous and important avocations; and when the reader recollects their multiplicity and value, he will not, surely, deny him the appellation of a great literary character.

Such was the nephew of Mr. Barnaby, clerk of the parish, and the schoolmaster of Paul. He had stolen a few days from labour and honor, to retire into the country, and pay a visit to his uncle, whom he had never yet seen, but

who entertained a profound veneration for him, and thought him the very *phœnix* of the age. To him, therefore, and to our hero let us now return.

CHAPTER VIII.

Paul becomes diligent in reading—not, however, a second Heinecker—Marvels greatly at the astonishing erudition of Caleb Inkhorn—His father resolves he shall not be poet, nor, consequently, a great man.

PAUL was now in his fourteenth year, when the remarkable event took place of Caleb's arrival at his uncle's. He had been suffered to attain that age, without doing any thing, merely because his parents were constantly resolving that he should be doing something. What that something was they never could decide: the wife wished one thing; the husband another; neither of them could prevail, and neither would submit: time passed on; and the only advantage that Paul derived from their contentious procrastination, was that he

continued at school, where he made very considerable progress in the acquisition of such knowledge as was within his reach. He began, indeed, to manifest a very eager desire for instruction, and often repined at his want of books. From this tardiness, however, in the developement of his intellect, the reader will guess that he was no prodigy: he was not a second Heinecker, who talked at ten months, knew the history of the Old Testament at thirteen, and, in his thirtieth month was acquainted with the history of the nations of antiquity, with geography, anatomy, and the use of the maps, besides acquiring eight thousand Latin words. These, and other equally wonderful, but totally incredible things, are related of this baby man by his panegyrist M. Martini, for the benefit of all those whose credulity is vast and voracious enough to digest the account. I wish, indeed, that I had some such miracles to record of my hero, for

“ the blood more stirs
To rouse a lion, than to start a hare.”

And I should perhaps be elevated to some uncommon pitch of sublimity, had I to tell of an epic poem written by Paul in his ninth year, or a metaphysical inquiry in his seventh. But, alas ! I am the historian of no such wonderful creature ; and lest I should quarrel with my subject, I will forbear to dilate upon what I could have done, had I found such a field for exertion.

I have said, however, that at this period Paul began to exhibit some predilection for literature, in so much, that he borrowed books of whoever had them to lend, and bought them, whenever he had money to do it with. Mr. Barnaby had collected a few odd volumes of poetry, plays, and novels ; and to these he freely granted his pupil access, for he was proud of his progress and eager to foster his predilection. He never failed to proclaim his genius, as often as he saw his parents ;

and these testimonies were particularly grateful to Dorothea: nor was Ezekiel insensible to the prognostics of his son's greatness. Still, however, he knew not to what good purpose he could apply his extensive learning, and the consciousness, that he was doing nothing substantially useful, was a heavy drawback upon the felicity which he would otherwise have experienced in the contemplation of his proficiency.

At this critical juncture arrived Mr. Inkhorn, that great literary character, at the house of Mr. Barnaby, who had prepared the whole village for his reception, by diffusing the tidings of his vast and universal genius. When Caleb presented himself to his admiring uncle, the latter stood for some moments gazing at him with a mixture of awe and astonishment; then, approaching reverentially towards him, he took his hand and pressed it to his lips, exclaiming, "these are the fingers that wrote, and there's the head that

conceived: hail, illustrious kinsman, welcome to my house." All this passed on the threshold of Mr. Barnaby's door, round which a groupe of villagers had assembled, looking with astonishment at the ceremony, while Mr. Barnaby's pupils stood behind him in the passage, staring with mute surprise. Caleb, who had no disrelish for flattery, however gross, scarcely, however, enjoyed this adoration, which, at first, he thought was done in mockery; but the solemn visage of his uncle, as well as his grave demeanor, soon dissipated that suspicion, and he was glad, therefore, when the salutation was over.

He had scarcely sat down, in the parlour, when Mr. Barnaby began to inquire eagerly about his literary projects; but Caleb, with much modesty, begged to defer that topic to a future opportunity. Meanwhile, he expressed a wish to visit the school-room, garden and other appurtenances of his uncle's dwelling. This

desire was readily gratified, and while Caleb was perambulating the garden, he took occasion to commend a fine bed of cabbages; but his uncle ventured to observe that they were potatoes and not cabbages: Caleb smiled, and Mr. Barnaby marvelled at the condescension of a great man.

How inferior is theory to practice! Mr. Inkhorn, who had written a farmer's encyclopedia and a gardener's kalendar, yet did not know a cabbage from a potatoe, unless they were out of the ground. Nor was this the only instance of misconception, of which Caleb was guilty during his rural excursion. Elms and oaks, currant and gooseberry bushes, leeks and onions, were perpetually changing names in his mouth, to the great joy of his uncle, who felt wonderfully proud of an opportunity to correct his nephew.

In the progress of their tour through the garden, they arrived at the school-room, which was built at one end of it, and

Caleb entered the abode of learning, followed by its awful master. The boys were all mute at their appearance, though they contrived to eye Mr. Inkhorn askance, as he proceeded up the room ; but if they encountered the looks of their pedagogue, they immediately bent over their books. Caleb commended the order and regularity of their appearance, which commendation was precious to the soul of Mr. Barnaby ; but he also exclaimed against the horrible fatigue and drudgery of a schoolmaster, at which his uncle was not quite so much delighted, though he did not venture to dispute his opinion. He took an opportunity, however, of descending upon the respective merits of his pupils, and did not fail to enlarge upon those of Paul.

“ This boy,” said he, leading him to Caleb ; “ if I know any thing of human nature, will one day shine in the world. He is the best scholar I ever had ; he learns quickly and remembers easily :

and he has, besides, a certain power of mind which is truly astonishing. His replies are sometimes wonderful ; and his eagerness for reading shews the richness of the soil. The day will come when I shall boast, that this boy was my scholar."

This pompous eulogium had its due effect upon Caleb, who proposed to examine the qualifications of the youth, to which his uncle cordially assented, adding, " he's no common boy ; his father indeed is but a tailor ; but what of that ? genius is not hereditary : your father, for instance"——

" Aye," replied Caleb abruptly, unwilling to discuss the merits of his sire ; " I am the architect of my own fortune ; I derive nothing from any one : I owe all my eminence to myself : and should I even be more distinguished than I am, the source of my future as of my past greatness will be in myself : *omnius meus*

mecum is my motto, as the Grecian orator said."

Mr. Barnaby, who loved the sound of Latin from his heart, could not conceal the joy he felt at hearing these words, and shaking Caleb by the hand, protested that he was rejoiced to find himself in the company of such a fine classical scholar. Then turning to Paul, "you see, my boy, what may be done by study: here's a gentleman who taught himself every thing, and is now one of the greatest men of the age, as you will be, sooner or later, no doubt; but you must stick to your books as he has done: and learn Latin, for genius is nothing without learning: *omnius mea mecum*: what a pomp of expression there is in those words," he continued, addressing himself to Caleb; "nothing in English could sound like it: there is a certain something, a sort of I don't know what, a kind of an harmonious twang that's mighty agreeable."

“ Why, yes,” said Caleb, with infinite pomp ; “ there is a peculiar majesty and euphony belonging to the Latin, which it is in vain to look for in any other living language : yet, *Omnia mecum*, is by no means so conspicuous for its harmony as some phrases which I could mention from the classical authors of the middle ages ; but let us wave the subject : my mind is not, just now, fit for abstract discussions.”

Paul listened to this discourse with great attention, and conceived a most profound veneration for the person of Mr. Inkhorn. Nor was he unmindful of the advice which his master had given him : the words sunk deep into his soul, and he resolved, in his own mind, to read with redoubled ardor, and to learn Latin. His youthful bosom already swelled with ambition, and every notion of trade was contemptuously dismissed from his thoughts. To become, like Mr. Inkhorn, a great literary character, was his deter-

mination, and he now only wished for some monitor to direct his steps. These ideas passed rapidly through his mind, and he was so occupied with them, that he was insensible to the further conversation between his accomplished model and his master. At length, Mr. Ink-horn proposed to his uncle that he should grant a holiday to the boys that afternoon, that they might enjoy each other's company without interruption. Mr. Barnaby assented: the school was dismissed: the rogues were happy, and Mr. Barnaby and his nephew returned to the parlor.

Paul, in his way home, was absorbed in meditation. He thought, again and again, of all he had that day seen and heard. A vague and indefinite feeling of literary fame took possession of his breast: it was a wandering fire, aimless but fervid. He knew not what he wished, and yet he could not forbear to wish. An obscure conception pervaded his

mind, to which he could give neither shape nor destination : yet, it served to stimulate him, and to nourish that love of reading which had already displayed itself. Hitherto, his opportunities of information had been few : they were such only as an obscure village could supply. Obstacles, however, but served to increase his ardour, and to fix a resolution in his mind that he would stir every resource that was within his reach, however remotely, to accomplish his purpose.

These thoughts and infant resolves occupied him till he arrived at his father's door. When he entered the room where Ezekiel and Dorothea were sitting, they were surprised to see him return from school at so unusual an hour ; but Paul soon explained the mystery by relating the whole affair, and dwelling with ecstasy upon the person and conversation of Mr. Inkhorn. He concluded his account by declaring that he would be

“ an author and nothing else, for fame followed the pursuit, and he should soon be a great literary character if he studied hard and learned Latin.”

Ezekiel, who knew as much about a literary character as Caleb did about cabbages, listened to this declaration with astonishment, believing that Paul was certainly unsettled in his wits. Even Dorothea, ambitious as she was that her son should be something great, knew not what to make of this greatness at which he now aimed ; and inquired, with some eagerness as to what he meant by becoming “ a great *literal* character.”

“ I mean,” said Paul, “ to write books, and become a poet.”

“ Now Christ forbid,” exclaimed Ezekiel, with uplifted hands, and eyes that rolled with terror. “ Christ forbid that you should lose your reason.”

“ Lose my reason,” replied Paul, laughing ; “ why that’s the only way to exercise it, father.”

"A poet," exclaimed Dorothea, with a most expressive scream, made up of a laugh and a cry, "now that's mortal fine: oh, I've heard a great deal about poets: when I lived servant with Mr. Pickthank who was tutor to Lord Do-nothing, I heard plenty about poets, what great men they were, and many of their books had pictures in them. Now, husband, as you love our dear son's life, do make him a poet, and he'll be a great man."

"*Poeta*," said Paul, with an emphasis, and strutting across the room, "*nascitur non fit*."*


"There wife, there," exclaimed Ezekiel, bursting into tears; "he says a po-

* If the reader wonders how Paul became so learned, I must tell him that he had read a life of Butler, prefixed to his *Hudibras*, which begins with this luminous sentence, and by the help of an Ainsworth, he had plucked out its meaning. This happy use of it, immediately after the admonitions of Mr. Barnaby, filled him with inexpressible delight.

et's an ass-eater, and not fit. I thought my boy was cracked, and now I know it. What have I done to be visited by such a heavy affliction?"

Dorothea, who had actually understood this aphorism in the same manner, turned a little pale, thinking indeed that the expression denoted some strange derangement of intellect; but Paul relieved her terrors and stopped his father's tears, which flowed abundantly, by explaining the meaning of what he had said; when his mother, turning round immediately to Ezekiel, exclaimed with a voice of indignation, "you are an ass, and not fit to have such a son." Ezekiel felt his ears, which seemed to grow under the reproof; and Dorothea continued, "you know no more about Latin and them there things, than that thimble upon your finger: it's all Greek to you and Hebrew I warrant."

"I know as much as you do, I fancy," said Ezekiel, nettled at this charge from



his wife, who certainly had as few pretensions to classical literature as her husband: "but it does not signify talking: the boy has got a foolish whim in his head, and we must get it out. Poets may be good enough sort of people, for any thing I know about them, and so may *littery* characters, as he calls them; but I don't choose that he should be any trade which I don't understand something about: in short, to settle the matter, I'll have him apprenticed to myself."

"Make him a tailor," said Dorothea with a lofty air of contempt. "Any man is good enough to sit cross-legged all his life and grow frouzy: I wonder at the vulgarity of your notions. You see the boy has got a hankering after books, and wants to be a great man, and yet you would set him on a shop-board with a needle and thread in his fingers, to mend every fool's breeches that chooses to come."

“ I’ll tell you what, wife,” said Ezekiel ; “ your foolish pride has made the boy what he is. If he had never heard you chattering and prating about lord chancellors and archbishops, he would have been contented to follow the craft of his father ; but now, forsooth, he must be a poet. We shall see what will come of it, but I have no great notion from such out of the way things.”

Paul now interposed and assured his father that poets made a great deal of money, for that Mr. Inkhorn had travelled in the mail from London, and was dressed much better than the parson. He added, also, that he was sure he should not like a trade, which would deprive him of every opportunity for study, without which he should never be what he wished ; and that, indeed, the only pleasure he felt was in reading. Ezekiel, who loved his son, and who was more likely to yield to his gentle solicitations than to the boisterous arguments of his

wife, listened calmly to this statement, and when he had done, represented the difficulty of gratifying his inclinations in the remote village where they lived, none of the inhabitants of which thought much of books : but Paul soon overcame this difficulty by observing that there was a circulating library in the next market town, to and from which a carrier went and came twice a week : that it would be easy to subscribe to this library, and obtain what books he wanted by means of Joe Jacobs the carrier.

These arguments were duly enforced by Dorothea ; and Ezekiel, after a long pause, slowly consented that Paul should subscribe for one quarter, which he no sooner heard, than his eyes gleamed with unwonted animation, and springing across the room, threw himself into his father's arms, and kissed him with all the warmth of filial affection. Ezekiel returned his caresses, and Paul was now the happiest of the happy. He

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did nothing but anticipate the feast that awaited, and would have set off on foot that very afternoon for the town, had not his father interposed, and told him that he would accompany him himself next morning, and settle the mode by which the books might be easily conveyed to and from the library.

CHAPTER IX

Caleb and his uncle enjoy an agreeable tête à tête, during which the former communicates some delightful specimens of his genius, which the reader will greatly admire.

WHILE these events were passing in the house of Ezekiel Plaintive, Mr. Barnaby and his illustrious nephew were enjoying an interesting tête à tête, during which Caleb disclosed his various literary projects, and the numerous works he had already produced. His uncle lifted up his eyes with astonishment as he heard the catalogue, not doubting that each of them was executed with all that perfection which a real knowledge of the subjects would have bestowed. He had quite forgotten Caleb's unfortunate mistake of the cabbage bed, and several other misnomers in rural matters which had already occurred, and which were singular

enough in a man who had written a *Farmer's Encyclopædia*, and a *Gardener's Calendar*; but it is highly probable that had he recollected them, he would, in the abundant eagerness of his admiration, have attributed them to that inconsistency which is sometimes found in great men, and that ignorance of trifles by which an exalted understanding is often distinguished.

It was Caleb's professed object to impress his uncle with a high notion of his abilities, and to that end he retailed copiously all that he knew. Though his knowledge was scanty it was miscellaneous, and by the help of a little dexterity might be made to go a great way. This was a secret which Caleb perfectly understood, and it is a secret which many more understand besides himself. I have heard those who read nothing but reviews, talk as dogmatically upon a modern publication as a professed critic; and though they know little else than the

titles and a few disjointed parts of works, they pass for men of extensive reading among those who are not qualified to detect the deception. I have often traced the notions of these second-hand *literati*, and have been amused by the search. I have not, indeed, unmasked them; for the vanity of knowledge is perhaps as harmless a vanity as any that can occupy the human mind.

Caleb, who derived all he knew from such casual sources of information, was duly conscious of the necessity of passing it for current, and of passing himself for a man of general and unlimited research. His conversation, accordingly, was "every thing by starts and nothing long." He could wander only upon the surface of things. Poetry, history, criticism, travels, metaphysics, medicine, astronomy, surgery, divinity and algebra, he could talk a little upon each. Such multifarious knowledge could not fail to produce a strong effect upon the mind of

Mr. Barnaby, who began seriously to doubt whether there had appeared, for centuries past, so transcendental a genius as Caleb Inkhorn, Esq.; and he reflected with astonishment upon his own temerity in venturing to contend some of his opinions, as he actually had done. As his boldness, however, passed unproved, it acquired strength, and Mr. Barnaby began to discourse quite at his ease, though still respectfully listening to the dicta of his nephew.

As they sipped, not of the fountain of Hippocrene, but a glass of brandy and water, Caleb informed his uncle, with an air of great secrecy, that he was about to publish a work which would immortalize his name and astonish the whole world. He had matured the plan, he said, with great deliberation, and had selected the incidents with great judgment and precaution. They were artfully interwoven, and made to produce the catastrophe so naturally and so obviously, that

it might aspire to the dignity of an epic poem in prose. It had cost him the labour of many weeks, besides an assiduous application to other literary engagements, and he had already bargained with the bookseller for the publication. "The fellow indeed," said he, "would fain have purchased the copy-right, and offered me a liberal price; but its value is above all price, so I kept it for myself, and I mean to allow him the privilege of publishing it, by which he will net a tolerable sum of money, I fancy; for when it is once announced, and with my name to it, his doors will be besieged with purchasers. I have not yet made up my mind as to how many thousand copies I shall have struck off, but there shall be plenty, for I abhor the idea of keeping the public mind in a state of expectation."

When Mr. Barnaby inquired about the object and nature of the work, Caleb smiled with an air of mystery at first, as if unwilling to trust such a precious secret

to any human ears ; but then, softening into condescension, and beckoning his uncle to approach nearer to him, while his looks assumed a wonderful degree of importance, he thus proceeded :

“ I once wrote a work called the *Sense of Sensibility* : it was a masterly production, full of fine situations, and composed in a strain of commanding and pathetic eloquence : its pathos in some parts, indeed, might have drawn tears from the eyes of a hangman : but I found it was too elevated, too refined for the present generation, so I one day committed it to the flames.”

Mr. Barnaby could not help uttering an exclamation of sorrow at this rash act, and he deplored, in a very moving manner, the loss which the world had unconsciously sustained. He was proceeding to prove that it was a breach of social duty to rob mankind of instruction and delight, when Caleb stopped him in the following manner :

“ In fact,” said he, “ I partly altered my own opinion respecting its merits. It was a youthful production, and youth, you know, is not the season when the judgment operates. I began to think that human nature would be rendered more miserable by acuminating its sensibility ; and as I foresaw that the popularity of my work would necessarily have a decided influence upon the public opinion, and upon the national feeling, I thought it wisdom’s part to suppress it. But I did not stop there. I had no sooner destroyed my offspring than I began to think that a work, having just an opposite object, would be productive of vast benefit to mankind ; I immediately sat down to the composition of it, and as my former one was called the *Sense of Sensibility*, I mean to call this the *Nonsense of Sensibility*.”

“ The *Nonsense of Sensibility*,” repeated Mr. Barnaby, “ I like that : it’s new, and, moreover, it has a queer sound ; just such a sound now as would make one

want to see it. Besides, its quite original ; poets, play-writers and novel writers, all try to exalt sensibility ; but to shew the nonsense of sensibility is truly a most happy conception."

" And the execution is no less so, I assure you," said Caleb. " How do you suppose I mean to proceed ?"

" Oh !" replied Mr. Barnaby, with a profound bow, and an uncommon expression of humility in his countenance, " is it for me to fathom your designs ?"

" Why," continued Caleb, " I intend to conduct my hero, whom I call *Weeping-eye*, through a variety of adventures. He is represented as overflowing with the milk of sensibility, and expecting to find, in the most common occurrences of life, something that may excite that tender passion : but, instead of answering his expectations, I contrive to make him, on all occasions, meet with disappointments, sometimes ludicrous and sometimes serious : but chiefly ludicrous, be-

cause ridicule you know is the more powerful of the two. By this means the nonsense of sensibility, or of expecting to discover wonders where nothing but what is common ought to be anticipated, will be amply illustrated."

"Yes, and most emphatically too," replied Mr. Barnaby. "You have not any of it with you, have you? I should like mightily to hear some of it."

"Why, to tell you the truth," rejoined Caleb, "I always carry it with me, for there is no security against being pillaged but that of our own vigilance: and I know that there are three booksellers, now in London, who have spies in pay, to watch me wherever I go, and to try and get this work into their possession. For that reason I take it with me every where: and they know this: so there's no fear of their breaking into my apartments in search of it, during my absence."

"But perhaps they may break into

this house," said Mr. Barnaby, with some alarm, " if they have followed you here. It is situated very lonely."

" No," replied Caleb, " the scoundrels do not leave their haunt : it's only in London that I am beset."

This assurance quieted the fears of Mr. Barnaby, and he again ventured to express the delight he should feel in hearing some parts of the manuscript read.

" Indeed, uncle," said Caleb ; " it is what I never do to any one, reading my works before they are printed ; but, as you are a relation, and not likely to divulge the secret among the learned, (for that's the great inconvenience which a popular and celebrated author experiences in reading his compositions while in MS.) I don't think I will refuse you."

So saying, he went to his portmanteau, which was deposited in one corner of the room, and opening it, he drew forth an enormous bundle of paper which Mr. Bar-

naby could not help contemplating with strong feelings of admiration : for it was the first time he had ever seen an author's manuscript. He had read, indeed, of our Addisons and our Popes, our Goldsmiths, and our Johnsons, communicating to each other the productions of their pens before they were presented to the world : but he had never formed a hope of enjoying such a felicity himself. He looked at the bundle therefore with reverence ; and, anxious to touch it, he offered his assistance to Caleb, who was untying a knot ; but the knot defied all his efforts, and Mr. Barnaby actually held the precious deposit in his hands, while his nephew sought for his penknife, that he might, like another Alexander, cut the knot he could not untie. While he was thus possessed of the invaluable treasure, he could not help peeping under the folds of the paper, and when his eye caught an *and* or a *but*, he was in a perfect ecstasy. At length Caleb dissevered the ligature,

and his uncle beheld the fluttering leaves spread out upon his table. He sat down in breathless expectation, while Caleb turned over the voluminous manuscript to select such parts as he proposed to gratify Mr. Barnaby with the perusal of. After some search he found what he wished, and drawing his chair close to his uncle's, he observed that a connected work, like his, must necessarily lose some of its effect by being read in detached parts : but the force of the language, and the felicity of the incident might be equally felt ; and he had selected such a part as did not depend much upon what went before or what followed. Even as a fragment, its beauties will be felt. " Let me see," continued he, " I told you that my hero, *Weeping-eye*, meets with various adventures : now, this is one of them, and from this you may form an idea of the rest."

Thus having said, Caleb read the following with great solemnity and with all the pomp of conscious importance.

* * * * * “ The night was stormy and the moon shone fitfully through the dark clouds. Not a star was to be seen : and the wind roared with unabating violence.

“ *Weeping-eye* walked pensively along. His mind was absorbed in the musings of sympathy. In his heart he pitied all those poor wretches who were doomed to bear this fury of the elements, and he wished that universal philanthropy prevailed upon earth. It was a delightful thought, and he dwelt upon it with fondness.

“ Suddenly, he heard the sound of voices floating on the breeze. He stood and listened with awe : after a while they died away in faint murmurs, and he heard them no more. He sighed and went on.

“ The moon now broke forth with momentary splendor, and he perceived, at a distance, a female clad in white apparel : she was alone, and stood gazing, wistfully, at a piece of water that flowed

by her feet. There was something melancholy, yet interesting in her appearance.

“ ‘ Surely,’ said *Weeping-eye* to himself, ‘ this lonely stranger cannot have wandered out at this dead hour of night, to end, in a moment of despair, a life of misery. Yet her air, her situation, all combine to render such an idea probable; and heaven, perhaps, has destined me to arrest the lovely mourner in her rash intent.’

“ The thought was quick as lightning, and he hurried forwards. The moon was envious, and again obscured herself as he reached the spot. He stood for a moment in silence. At length he spoke.

“ ‘ Forgive a stranger’s rudeness,’ he exclaimed, ‘ that makes him thus intrude upon your meditations.’

“ ‘ No offence, Sir,’ replied the interesting female.

“ This affability charmed him. He seized her hand involuntarily and pressed

it to his lips. 'Do not, fair creature,' he said, 'renounce the pleasures of existence, and, by one mad action, endanger thy eternal felicity. Ah !' and he pointed to the water, 'I fear your intentions are gloomy and horrible. Let me lead you from this fatal spot : let me lead you to your home, your friends, and to happiness.'

"The female laughed aloud. *Weeping-eye* thought it the convulsive laughter of madness, and his frame shuddered. Again he pressed her hand, and again he urged her to withdraw.

" 'Lord bless your honor, I'm waiting for my husband,' exclaimed the lady.

" 'Husband ! Husband !' he reiterated in a tone of wonder and alarm, and started back into the gutter.

" 'Yes,' she continued ; 'he's only gone yonder for a quartern of brandy. My shoes are leaky, and I was afraid of catching cold : so I sent him for a drop.'

“ *Weeping-eye* was confounded: he muttered a few unintelligible words: looked at the stream, which he found to be a horse-pond: and at the female, who proved to be a washer-woman in a white-bed gown: and departed, lamenting the extinction of sympathy in the human breast.

“ But the generous ardour of his feelings was not to be subdued. He pitied the deluded female who could drink brandy in the streets: he wept over her infatuation: he still walked on, and sighed and wept, and wept and sighed, till he came to a gateway, over which a lamp was suspended, when his steps were arrested by the following eloquent apostrophe.

“ You shall live, poor trifler: I will not needlessly shed your innocent blood. Whatever exists, demands the reverence and forbearance of man, and you shall experience mine. I will still nourish you, even with my blood. Oh Sensibility! how ecstatic are thy transports!

With what a flood of rapture is my heart overwhelmed now that I resolve to spare thee, thou harmless creature. Let me gaze upon thee once again. Helpless, unoffending being. Come, shelter yourself in my bosom.'

"Moved by the feeling with which these last words were uttered, *Weeping-eye* turned round to behold the speaker. He started back with astonishment.

"It was a beggar! Squalid and disgusting! Covered with rags and filth, he seemed to be the outcast of human nature. At his side lay his wallet, filled with bones and offals: his beard was long and dirty; and his whole appearance tended to excite disgust. 'Can it be,' said he to himself, 'that this hideous being possesses a heart so overflowing with tenderness and philanthropy? But let me not form useless conjectures. I will do homage to humanity wherever I find it, whether in the monarch or the beggar.'

“ Headvanced towards him : his heart palpitated with indescribable emotions. He felt, already, as if a reciprocity of soul existed between them : he seemed to participate in the feelings which had been just expressed. He viewed him even as something sacred.

“ ‘ Friend,’ he exclaimed, ‘ I have listened with delight to the emanation of feeling which has just proceeded from you. Amiable man ! what lustre does thy poverty receive from the virtues of thy heart ! How rich must you be in the delights of sensibility ! Tell me : what is it that you are thus resolved to shelter in your bosom, thou man of feeling ?’

“ ‘ A louse, an please your honor,’ replied the fellow with a broad grin.

“ ‘ A louse,’ exclaimed *Weeping-eye*, bursting into tears of vexation.

“ ‘ Yes, your honor, a louse.’

“ ‘ Hell and d——n,’ ejaculated *Weeping-eye*, with a sob and walked away.”

“ Well,” said Caleb to Mr. Barnaby, as soon as the latter had recovered from an immoderate fit of laughter, in which his nephew very cordially joined him,--- (an author is sometimes the only one who laughs at his own wit,) “ well,” said he, “ what do you think of the execution? Is not the humour exquisite, and the language no less so? Do you observe the artful manner in which I veil my purpose, appearing serious, and solemn, and magnificent to the last, and then popping upon the reader with an admirable burlesque termination: there’s no one but myself, I fancy, who could do it, eh?”

“ Oh, it is most exquisite,” rejoined Mr. Barnaby, bursting out into a fresh laugh.

“ I know it is,” said Caleb; “ and the whole work is composed in just the same wonderful strain of raillery: no, no: booksellers are cunning enough; but they will be cunning indeed if they get

this work out of my possession. It will be an estate to me."

"An estate," replied his uncle, "you might raise a loan upon it, if money-lenders were authors."

"Aye, or if authors had money. But that's all one. I shall raise enough upon it, I warrant: the public admiration and gratitude will be my factors; they will amply indemnify me for all the expence of genius which I have incurred in producing this singular and truly astonishing work."

"Astonishing enough," added Mr. Barnaby with an emphasis. "And when do you mean to publish it?"

"I am in no hurry," answered Caleb; "for as the Roman orator says, *Spirita in tempore, gloria in turdum*,* that is, glory,---"

* Perhaps Mr. Inkhorn meant to say, *Spreta in tempore gloria interdum cumulatione reddit*, which is to be found in Livy, B. II. Ch. 47. and not in any Roman orator that I am acquainted with. I propose this emendation

"Aye, aye," interrupted Mr. Barnaby, unwilling to be thought deficient in classical knowledge; "I know what it means, and a very fine sentence it is: and as you intend, I suppose, to act up to it, we may soon expect to see the publication of your work."

"Exactly," replied Caleb; "I shall publish it forthwith; I should regret extremely, indeed, to deprive the world of it much longer: but you have yet only an imperfect conception of its merits. Having a talent for poetry, I have introduced some very fine verses into several parts."

"Have you?" said his uncle, while his eyes glistened with delight: "I love poetry, by nature I may almost say, and I always use the *Black Pigeon* in this village in preference to any other house, because the tobacco-box of the room has upon its lid,

with much hesitation, conscious how rash it is to attempt the interpretation of the thoughts of great men.

" Put in a halfpenny before you fill,
Or forfeit sixpence which you will."

" Indeed my vocation necessarily makes me familiar with poetry, and between you and me, I believe we have few better poets in the language than Sternhold and Hopkins. I never give out the 137th Psalm without feeling the tears ready to gush into my eyes. Perhaps you don't remember it : I'll chaunt it to you :---"

" Spare yourself the trouble," interrupted Caleb ; " I have a perfect recollection of it ; but I'm glad to find you have such a relish for the muses : they are my chief companions : you shall hear how they have inspired me."

So saying he turned to another part of the MS. which he still held in his hand, and continued, "*Weeping-eye*, indefatigable in his pursuit after objects that may excite his sensibility, turns at last from men to books, hoping to find, in the latter, what has been uniformly denied

to him in the former. But I take care that he is disappointed, as the following will testify.

“ *Weeping-eye* entered a coffee-house one day, his mind chagrined by mistakes, and his heart ready to burst with the overflowings of that sympathy which he had yet been unable to bestow upon any human being. Like a pent-up river swelled with sudden rains, it was ready to discharge itself with the first occasion, and as the waiter brought him a cup of coffee, he looked wistfully in his face to see if he could trace any appearance of affliction that he might condole with him: but the fellow had features that would have done credit to a hangman, and *Weeping-eye* turned aside, disgusted and forlorn. He then took an accurate survey of the whole company, but they all seemed cheerful and contented, except one old man in a corner, who, just as *Weeping-eye* was preparing to accost him, paid his reckoning and went out. Thus

desolate, he took up a magazine that lay before him, when his eye was arrested by a poetical effusion entitled *Arthur, a sentimental piece*: his joy was wondrous as he perused the expressive words; and, forgetful that his coffee was growing cold, he forthwith read as follows:

“ Dark was the night, and loud the wind storm
howl’d,

Around, above, the vivid lightnings glare;

The thunder’s awful noise unceasing roll’d,

In dreadful peals along the troubl’d air!

When ARTHUR, silent, bent his careful way

Across the landing’s dun and dangerous gloom,

Seiz’d on the massy door—that straight gave way,

And entered slow the horror-breathing room!

Trembling with dumb amazement now he trod,

While hope and fear his breast alternate sway’d;

Reach’d where full well he knew there stood

A table dimly gleaming in the shade.

He felt—but uttered with terrific fear,

‘G—d d——n the tinder-box, it is not here.’”

“ Language must be inadequate to the description of *Weeping-eye*’s astonishment and vexation as he came to the last line. He had been wrought up to expect

something terrific if not sentimental ; but the conclusion filled him with consternation and chagrin. So great was his disappointment that he was preparing to tread the pamphlet under his feet, when he perceived another piece of poetry, immediately following the above, and the title of which promised him an ample indemnification : it was, *Lines addressed to a sleeping infant, by its mother*. What an interesting topic ! How touching, how pathetic might it not be ! How full of all those tender images which so powerfully excite sensibility ! No subject could be conceived more soothing, more fascinating ! Full of this belief he kept the book in his hand, and read the following :

• Sleep on, sweet babe, unconscious of that pain
Which rends thy mother's agonised breast.
Sleep on, sweet child, nor ever wake again,
But wing thy passage to eternal rest.
For thou wert born the heir of pining grief,
And penury and guilt thy birth-right are :

When I am gone, ah! who shall give relief,
 Or shield thy youth from heart-corroding care?
 In tears conceiv'd: in tears matur'd wert thou:
 Brought forth in tears foreboding future woe:
 Once I was bless'd, but this, alas! is now
 The only source from which my comforts flow.
 She said—then hast'ning to complete her sin,
 Slow from her pocket drew—A PINT OF GIN!

“ This was too much for *Weeping-eye*. His philanthropy was exhausted: he tore the magazine into atoms, and was hurrying out of the room in a fit of desperation, when he was stopped at the door by the waiter, whose countenance he had so fruitlessly examined, and found he had to pay for the magazine which he had destroyed, and the coffee which he had not drunk. This he indignantly did, and sallied into the street, denouncing the whole human race as beings without sympathy.”

Mr. Barnaby was no less delighted with these than with the former adventures of *Weeping-eye*; and Caleb tied up his manuscript again, thinking that all

condescension should have its limits, and that he had given great proofs of his, in having indulged his uncle with the hearing of some of the most felicitous parts of his work. By this time the evening had closed in, and Caleb, who was weary with his journey, expressed a wish to retire; which wish was immediately granted, and his uncle soon after followed his example, not without a strong conviction of the great man who was that night sleeping under his roof, and some little apprehension lest the three booksellers' spies should have traced his route, and break in to acquire the precious manuscript. In the midst of these thoughts he began to snore, and all his fears were at rest.

CHAPTER X.

*Paul and his father set forth upon an expedition—
A disaster happens to Caleb—The issue of it.*

THE sun had no sooner risen in the east than Paul sprung from his bed, where he had passed a sleepless night, and hurried to his father's room to rouse him from the arms of Morpheus, that he might accompany him to the library in pursuance of his promise. Ezekiel, who felt none of that ardour by which his son was impelled, unwillingly shook off the downy slumbers with which his eye-lids were oppressed, and tumbling out of bed with a direful yawn, which exhibited a wonderful expanse of mouth, he dressed himself forthwith; and issuing from his room, found Paul waiting for him on the stairs, and holding his hat ready for him to put on; while Dorothea, as he left the room, bawled out "Subscribe for half a year."

Ezekiel, who had no such intention when he quitted the house, was, however, prevailed upon by the entreaties of Paul, which were reiterated during their whole journey, to extend his benevolence so far ; and accordingly when they arrived at the place, which was a good ten miles from home, he pulled out three shillings instead of eighteen pence ; and in consideration of which gratuity Paul became entitled to the use, for six months, of all the volumes which greeted his eager eyes as he entered the shop of Mr. Vellum. But there was yet another expence of three pence to render the transaction complete, and this was to purchase a catalogue: this was done also, and Paul selected from it two books to take back with him. The names of these books I shall record ; for the early studies of great men have always been subjects of curiosity, as tending to throw some light upon the ultimate direction of their talents. They were *Spenser's*

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*Fairy Queen, and Goldsmith's Vicar of
Wakefield.*

With this treasure under his arm, he accompanied his father to an inn in the town, that they might have breakfast, for it was too far to return with an empty stomach. While this repast was preparing, Paul was busy in turning over the leaves of Spenser, who chiefly attracted his notice. He read at random, but he found himself in a new world. His mind was entranced with wonder and delight. Magicians, fairies, and enchantment, filled his young fancy with the most pleasing images. The obsolete diction of Spenser was no impediment. Single words he might not understand; but the general sense was perfectly intelligible to him. Not so to his father, who looking over him for a few moments, and being puzzled with *whilomes, ekes, perdies, weets, and weens*, could not help peevishly exclaiming, "Latin, nothing but Latin: silly boy,

you'll turn your head at last ;" but Paul convinced him, though with some difficulty, that the book was really written in English.

Breakfast was now introduced, and Paul reluctantly forsook the repast of intellect for the repast of body : but man is a double creature, and his sensual wants are more urgent than his mental ones ; and Paul, therefore, closed the volume and devoured the buttered rolls with great rapidity, to which his long walk had greatly contributed. While they were silently employed in this interesting avocation, their ears were suddenly invaded by a violent outcry in the yard of the inn, and hurrying to the window, which overlooked the place of tumult, Ezekiel beheld, to his great astonishment, Mr. Barnaby in warm altercation with a bailiff.

" I tell you," said the impetuous pedagogue, " that gentleman is my nephew, and not the man you think."

" And I tell you, my queer one, his

name is Caleb Inkhorn, and though he fights shy we've nabb'd him at last ; so you may as well go back to your school and birch, for you'll do no good here. He's our prisoner, and he does'nt tip us the back of his leg till he gets to London."

Paul, who heard this eloquent address to his schoolmaster, was no less confounded than his father, to find Mr. Inkhorn a prisoner : Ezekiel, who had heard from his son such an exalted description of Caleb's appearance and accomplishments, was considerably disconcerted by this adventure, and turning to Paul he exclaimed with some eagerness, " Rabbit it, is not this your gentleman poet ?"

Paul was about to reply when Mr. Barnaby looking up, and beholding him and his father at the window, entreated the latter to descend into the yard and hear the wickedness of the whole transaction. To this request Ezekiel willingly assent-

ed, and desiring Paul to accompany him, they both arrived at the scene of action just as Mr. Inkhorn issued from an adjoining room followed by another bailiff. His uncle, without attending to him, was about to explain to Ezekiel the iniquity and illegality of the business, when Caleb stepped up, and with much coolness and deliberation informed him, that upon making enquiry he found there was no mistake in the affair. "It is a writ," said he, "which a rascally tavern-keeper has issued against me out of pique, because I ordered my wines from another house; but his were so execrably bad, that neither I, nor any of my friends could touch them. His Madeira to be sure was tolerable, but his Lisbon was vile. D——n the fellow, to inconvenience a gentleman for the paltry sum of twenty pounds: I happened, unfortunately, to put no more cash into my pocket than what I thought would be sufficient for my expences up

and down, so I must e'en go with these scoundrels to London."

When Mr. Barnaby heard that his nephew was really arrested, and for so small a sum, he immediately began to talk of accommodating the business in some such way as might preserve to him the company of his nephew a little longer ; and learning from the two gentlemen of the law who were in attendance upon his illustrious kinsman, that competent bail would be received, he instantly applied to Ezekiel to join him in that office. Ezekiel, who had no great relish for the business, began to invent sundry excuses, such as his wife's displeasure : a vow which he had taken never to bail any one since Parson Fob-him run away and left him to pay seven pounds, fourteen shillings and ninepence three farthings : a dislike to have any thing to do with lawyers, &c. &c. all of which Mr. Barnaby successively overruled with great dexterity, and con-

tinued to urge him with so many and such repeated arguments, that at last he consented, because he saw no probable method of avoiding it. This point being settled, the next business was to find an attorney who might be set to work to prepare the proper papers ; and while one of the bailiffs was dispatched to select a proper person, Ezekiel invited Mr. Barnaby and his nephew to enter and partake of the breakfast which he had ordered. To this they willingly consented ; a fresh supply of rolls and tea was procured, and while they are using their joint efforts to dispose of them, the reader shall be informed of the particulars that led to the appearance of Mr. Inkhorn in the inn yard.

When this great literary character left London, it was not so much to enjoy the aspect of nature, as to escape from the importunities of certain very troublesome people called creditors, who were very apt to break in upon his hours of

study and retirement with manuscripts in their hands which he was rather averse from perusing; for an author has generally enough to do with reading his own. Some of these were more clamorous than others; and in short Caleb had used his imagination instead of his memory, when he told his uncle that three booksellers had spies in pay to dog him wherever he went. There were, indeed, three persons who were very anxious to find him out, viz. his baker, his butcher, and his tailor; and it is said that they had each taken out a writ against him, and of course employed a very necessary sort of spies to serve it. But Caleb, whose head teemed with notions of grandeur, transformed these gentlemen and their employers into very different characters. To escape them, however, he found it necessary to absent himself from London for a while, till the monthly payments which he received from several booksellers should come round, when he would

be able to discharge their demands, and re-appear in the metropolis.

The writ by which he was now held in durance, was at the suit, not of a tavern-keeper for choice wines, but of a cook-shop-man for boiled beef and pudding, his daily fare, and the expence of which had been accumulating from week to week upon the strength of repeated promises of payment. Mr. Nab, at length, refused to supply him any longer until his demands were satisfied; and Caleb, instead of thinking that necessary, transferred his belly concerns to another house, which reaching Mr. Nab's ears, he became so enraged that he not only took out a writ, but had it served upon him at so great a distance from London to increase his debtor's law expences. Two bailiffs were accordingly dispatched, having previously obtained a correct account of his abode, and they arrived at Mr. Barnaby's house about six o'clock in the morning. Mr.

Barnaby was already up, and working in his garden, when one of them accosted him by his name, at which the school-master expressed some surprize ; “ not having,” as he said, “ the pleasure of knowing him.”

“ That’s likely enough,” replied the body snatcher ; “ but I have the honor of knowing you by name, and am intimately acquainted with your nephew : so, hearing he was in these parts, I took a ride over this morning to pay my respects to him. Is he stirring yet ?”

“ No, he is not,” said Mr. Barnaby ; “ but I’ll wake him : he’ll be glad to see you, I dare say.”

“ Nay,” replied the other, “ don’t do that : I can wait till he is stirring.”

“ That you sha’n’t,” added the pedagogue, “ it’s time he was unroosted. Walk in.”

“ Thank you,” rejoined the bailiff ; “ but I’ve a friend waiting for me at the end of the lane : I’ll just ask him to walk up.”

“Do so, do so,” said Mr. Barnaby, planting his spade in the earth, while the fellow hastened off to summon his coadjutor; who had kept at a wary distance, according to their customary mode of attack, lest their victim should be apprized of their approach, and while they are entering at the front door, make his escape at the back.

When they returned, Mr. Barnaby welcomed them both into his house, and leaving them in the parlour, hastened up stairs to his nephew, at whose door he began such a clattering as soon roused Caleb from his sleep. Inquiring what was the matter, Mr. Barnaby told him to dress immediately, and come down, for two gentlemen were waiting to see him in the parlour. Caleb, who really had no suspicion of an arrest in that part of the country, rubbed his eyes open, and put on his clothes with great expedition, wondering who it might be that knew him so far from London. When he was dressed, he descended into

the parlour, and the moment he beheld the two "gentlemen," his bosom was filled with prophetic fears. He better understood the appearance of bailiffs than his uncle, and these two "gentlemen" were just such as he would turn his back upon, if he had happened to see them at one end of a street while he was at the other. Not wishing, however, to let his apprehensions betray him, he assumed a placid and courteous mien, and advancing towards the "gentlemen" begged the favour of their names; as he did not, at that moment, recollect their persons; and he knew not, therefore, to whom he was indebted for the honor of so unexpected a visit. But these blandishments of speech had no effect; one of them advancing towards him, asked if his name was Caleb Inkhorn? to which his uncle eagerly replying in the affirmative; "then," said he, "you are my prisoner."

"Your prisoner!" exclaimed Mr.

Barnaby with indescribable terror and astonishment.

"Your prisoner!" re-echoed Caleb, with a lofty air of disdain, and walking to the other end of the room. "At whose suit, fellow?"

"Aye, at whose suit, fellow?" added his uncle with a stride, in imitation of his nephew.

"At the suit of Matthew Nab," rejoined the bailiff.

When Caleb heard this name, the mystery was perfectly intelligible to him, but he still wished to affect surprise before his uncle; and therefore persisted that he knew no such person, and that there must be some mistake. But his pursuers were not to be *fobbed*, and they told him, in plain terms, that he must return to London with them, or that if he did not do it peaceably, they had power to call upon the nearest magistrate to assist them in conveying him back. If he preferred it, indeed, they offered to

lodge him in the county gaol : but Caleb
 who had as little relish for the one as
 for the other, told them with an air of de-
 fiance, that he would return with them,
 but it should be to punish their insolence
 in daring to arrest him falsely. To this
 bravado they did not pay much atten-
 tion, satisfied with having attained the
 object of their journey ; and Caleb pre-
 pared to accompany them, though with
 repeated assurances that he was not the
 man, and strong menaces of punishment
 to his detainers. As for Mr. Barnaby,
 he had looked on with astonishment,
 and could not help telling the bailiffs,
 (much to the scandal of his clerkly of-
 fice,) “ that they were d——d scoundrels
 for entering his house under false pre-
 tences.” As, however, he firmly be-
 lieved the mistake which his nephew
 asserted, he accompanied him to the inn
 whence the London stages departed, in
 hopes that the error might be rectified be-
 fore they should set off for the metropo-

lis. Thus it was that they happened to arrive at the same time as Ezekiel and his son ; and Mr. Barnaby when he heard that Caleb was actually the person, felt rather more surprise than he chose to express. But we will return to him now, and to the rest of the company.

CHAPTER XL

A Colloquy between Caleb, his uncle, Ezekiel and Paul.—The praise of vanity—Description of Mr. Parchment, a lawyer; his woful accident.—Caleb liberated.

CALEB soon recovered his tranquillity, and discoursed with as much ease and gaiety at breakfast, as if no bailiff was in the room to watch his motions. He laughed at the “droll adventure” as he called it, and turning to Ezekiel, observed, with matchless assurance, “Sir, you will have the honor, this day, of bailing a celebrated literary character: Sir, your name, and that of my good uncle will go down to posterity, as surely as mine will.” Ezekiel, however, whose notions of posterity were much the same as those of the Hibernian who refused to plant trees for her benefit, because she had done nothing for his, and whose sense of the honor, in this affair,

was something like Falstaff's in that of a battle, would willingly have declined the dignified post: but Mr. Barnaby, who, like some modern critics, was eager to pin his name upon the wing of a great man, and so travel onwards to future ages, smiled with great solemnity at the declaration of his nephew, and answered, that "he should be proud to be registered on the rolls of fame as the relative and bail of so great a name."

"Like Mr. Laughlin MacLaine," said Paul with a mixture of timidity and confidence.

"And who is Mr. Laughlin MacLaine?" enquired Mr. Barnaby.

"A gentleman who relieved Goldsmith when he was poor," answered Paul.

"Very pertinently introduced, indeed," said Caleb. "But pray, my little fellow, how came you to be so well acquainted with that fact?"

"I have been reading it," rejoined our hero, "in this book," handing to him

the *Vicar of Wakefield*, to which was prefixed a short memoir of its author; and there he had just read the circumstance, as they were summoned from their repast by the tumult in the yard.

“ I told you,” said Mr. Barnaby, with honest pride in his pupil; “ I told you he was no common boy. You see how quickly and accurately he applies his knowledge. Sir,” continued he, addressing himself to Ezekiel, who had sat silent during this colloquy, “ if you do not foster, by every means in your power, the talents which your son possesses, you will be guilty of the greatest crime towards him, and towards God, who never bestows such talents in vain.”

“ Why as to his talents,” replied Ezekiel, still tenacious of the superiority of a tailor to a poet; “ they may or may not be something worth notice; but it’s hard to say what are a boy’s talents: youngsters are full of whimsies, in which they must not be too much cockered and caded: for

my own part, indeed, I would have had him a tailor, which is a trade that will always be wanted as long as it is the fashion to wear clothes: but his mother, who, truth to say, is a very weak woman, God help her, must fill his head with idle notions about this thing and that thing, and t'other thing, till at last the lad was clean altered: and I dare say you'll hardly guess the foolish errand that brought me here this morning."

"Indeed I cannot," said Mr. Barnaby.

"No, I'll warrant it," replied Ezekiel, "and you'll be surprised when you hear it, though I don't know that, for it is your trade to speak in favor of *larning* as it is mine to praise broad-cloth: but his mother teased me, and he teased me, till at last I was fain to come to Mr. Yellum's here, and pay for half a year's subscription to his library, that Paul, forsooth, might idle away his time with reading."

"Sir," interrupted Caleb; "what bet-

ter could you do than nourish the germs of genius till they germinate ?”

Ezekiel would certainly have answered this question if he had comprehended it, for he was not deficient in common politeness ; but as he did not, he merely replied, “ if that’s Latin I don’t understand it ;” and, reddening to the tips of his ears, he gulped down the remains of a cup of cold tea that stood before him.

Caleb, who regarded the misconception of Ezekiel as a flattering testimony of the philosophical profundity of his language, thought, however, that it became him to be intelligible, and he repeated his observation in words of more familiar sound, with which Ezekiel was well pleased, and answered “ that if it should appear his son really possessed any talents out of the way, he might be as proud of them as any other father ; but a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush : and if he was a tailor, there was something certain in it : but as to

his becoming a great man that was not certain at all."

Mr. Barnaby assured him, that he, as his schoolmaster, had had many opportunities of noticing the qualities of Paul's mind, and he was sure it was not of the common order, that it deserved every possible cultivation, and that he (Ezekiel) had acted most wisely in having procured him such means of information as were within his reach.

Paul listened to this discourse with mute attention, and the reader may easily conceive what effect it would have upon a mind already pre-disposed to view itself as distinguished, by some peculiarities, from the minds of ordinary men. Vanity is a weed of quick growth, and in no soil does it prosper with greater rapidity than in the towering thoughts of aspiring youth. When we arrive at that age which leaves childhood behind; and looks to manly prime in the distant perspective; when every thing is new,

and every thing delightful; when the world's tumultuous scenes are calling for our participation, and its joys thrilling to our hearts; when we have ceased to be a cypher in the great account of life; just at that momentous period, which every child looks forward to with rapture, and every man, perhaps, looks back upon with unavailing regret; at that moment vanity unfurls the standard in our hearts, which she had planted there in the blameless days of infancy. To give that vanity its true direction, to fan it into generous emulation, to exalt it into honor, manliness, and philanthropy; to make it the purveyor of wisdom, the guard of virtue, and the scourge of vice, to give it humility, which is the surest basis of all that is great, or dignified, or useful in society; to make it, in short, the great moral engine of public and private worth, is the arduous, the delicate task of those who, at that early period, surround us. But how rarely is it at-

tended to ! How much more frequently do we behold an injudicious nourishment of puerile and noxious vanity, which, teaching the youthful mind to over-rate its qualities, makes it often rest indolently satisfied with imaginary qualifications, without striving to attain those that are really valuable. There are few things so injurious to youth as commendation, unless most sparingly and most skilfully bestowed ; and the circumstances deserving of it must be accurately discriminated, or we shall assuredly confound, in the estimation of those we applaud, objects totally dissimilar. Perhaps, however, in the case of my hero, it was rather beneficial than hurtful to him, that Caleb and Mr. Barnaby so warmly asserted the existence of his genius, (though in his presence) ; for he required the support of some external approbation to uphold him against that weight of discouragement which the uniform opposi-

tion of his father might be expected to produce: and such was, precisely, the effect that it produced upon him. He began to consider Ezekiel's disinclination as the effect of prejudice, and his own superiority as incontestible; while he resolved to employ all requisite means to give that superiority its necessary weight and importance.

In the midst of these cogitations, which occupied the mind of Paul, the bailiff returned, who had been dispatched for an attorney, and informed the company that he had found one, who would wait upon them forthwith. These were glad tidings to Caleb, his uncle, and to Paul, who was very ambitious of being yet a little more in the company of Mr. Inkhorn, which he had every probability of being, during his stay at his uncle's: but Ezekiel had been secretly forming hopes of the fellow not finding a lawyer, which were now all dissipated. To repine, however, was use-

less: nor had he time; for close upon the heels of the bailiff followed Mr. Parchment, attorney at law, whose personal attractions were such, that nothing but the language of poetry can do justice to them. Let me, therefore, borrow the portrait sketched by the hand of Dryden:

With leering look, bull fac'd, and freckl'd fair,
With two left legs, with Judas-colour'd hair,
And frowzy pores that taint the ambient air.

To this may be added that his stature was something less than five feet, that his nose and chin formed an accurate semi-circle, that his back bore the load which confers a title upon its possessor, and that the rotten bones which his mouth disclosed made it resemble rather a sepulchre than any thing belonging to living man. Such was Mr. Anthony, Parchment, who now entered the room, bowing obsequiously to every one present, while a green bag, containing the implements of his profession, depended from his left arm, and a smart walking-

cane and his hat occupied his right hand. When desired to take a chair at the table, he sat down ; but being scanty in longitude, nothing appeared above the edge of the table except two immense bushy eye-brows, coal black, and a frizzled top-knot of the same colour : when Ezekiel, who was planted on the other side, and whose own height did not permit him to shew much more than his chin, suddenly started up and exclaimed, " For God's mercy, has the gentleman tumbled down ? " — " Oh, no, Sir," replied a squeaking voice under the table, " I'm here." — " That you are, certainly," rejoined Ezekiel ; " but heaven preserve me if I see you," and he peeped under the breakfast cloth to satisfy his incredulity, where he saw three-fourths seven eighths of Mr. Parchment's body deposited in the seat of a capacious arm chair.

This adventure furnished great amusement to all present, and to none more

than Paul, whose loud and reiterated bursts of laughter, not even the presence of Mr. Barnaby could control. However, it was necessary that the lawyer should be visible, and accordingly means were employed to elevate him in his seat. There happened to be, in one corner of the room, a small packing-case, which, being placed in the chair, and Mr. Parchment on the top of it, he found himself agreeably exalted to a level with the rest of the company; and this matter being thus adjusted, he forthwith proceeded to business. He drew out of his green bag a number of papers, stamps and parchments, as evidences that he was a man of business, and selecting one of them, which was a bail-bond, he bestrid his nose with a pair of green spectacles, which had circular eyes of no common dimensions, and drawing a portable standish from his pocket, he began to fill up the writing, with the respective names of the parties. While he was

thus employed, the top of the box broke in with a loud crack, which was immediately followed by a tremendous yell from Mr. Parchment, whose posteriors suddenly descending, his legs were elevated in the air, so that his toes nearly came in contact with his head. The laughter which this incident might have created, was somewhat diminished by the loud and reiterated cries of the lawyer, who implored the company to deliver him from his jeopardy for the love of God, for he believed he was stuck upon a thousand daggers. This pathetic appeal had an instantaneous effect upon the two bailiffs, who sprung to his assistance, and taking him under each arm endeavoured to lift him from his confinement : but his hinder part was so tightly wedged in, that when they raised him up, the box accompanied him, at which he renewed his groans and exclamations. Mr. Barnaby now came to his aid, and holding the packing-case firmly

down, they at last succeeded in disengaging him from its compression, and Mr. Parchment, springing upon the ground, exhibited to the astonished company three pieces of beautiful porcelaine projecting from his "seat of honor," as Butler politely terms it. Putting his hand, as naturally he might do, to feel his wounds, he lacerated his fingers with the sharp edges of the broken ware, and seeing the blood flow, he began to caper about the room, making hideous grimaces and noises, and bewailing his lamentable condition. Caleb, who partly pitied and partly enjoyed his mishap, approached him, and told him that there were three pieces of china sticking in his catastrophe, which if he would permit him, he would pull out. "Pull the devil out," exclaimed the lawyer, writhing with agony; "I believe my backside's cut to pieces."

It was in vain that every one present exhorted him to have the fragments ex-

tracted : he still kept capering about the room, sometimes sucking his fingers, that now began to ache, sometimes cautiously approaching his other hand to his wounded bum, and sometimes backing, with great agility, against the wall, lest any of the persons present should attempt to pluck out the offending pieces. The pain at length became so intolerable that he was forced to submit to the operation, and one of the bailiffs accordingly approaching he pulled them forth one by one, and at each pull Mr. Parchment uttered a heavy groan. So great an effusion of blood followed, that the lawyer became seriously alarmed for the consequence, and he entreated that a surgeon might be sent for. This request was immediately complied with, one of the waiters being dispatched upon that errand.

Meanwhile, an examination of the box and its contents took place, when it was found to contain a set of cups

and saucers, with all necessary appendages, which were to have been sent off to London by the next coach. It was likely, therefore, that the laceration of the lawyer's posteriors would prove but one part of his misfortune: the other, and probably the greater, would be the expence of the damages which he had committed. Of this, however, he did not then think; all his thoughts being concentrated in that part of him which now gave him intolerable pain. Unable to sit, or to stand upright, he was leaning over the back of a chair in a most ludicrous attitude, and with a most piteous expression of woe in his countenance, when the waiter returned with a surgeon, who causing Mr. Parchment to lower his breeches, and examining the wounds, found they were not dangerous, the pieces having entered but a little way. He ordered some warm water and a sponge, and cleansing the blood, he applied a styptic to staunch

the present effusion, after which he prescribed three healing plaisters to be applied. These, he said, he would send to Mr. Parchment's house, whither the lawyer proposed to return as soon as he had concluded his business.

The surgeon having departed, and some time having passed in condoling with Mr. Parchment for his disaster, they were about to re-commence the object of their meeting, when the landlord entered the room in great consternation and alarm, respecting the broken china, which he said, belonged to Mrs. Tabitha Tomkins, an antiquated virgin, and the possessor of several large estates in the neighbourhood. It was intended as a present to a maiden sister in London, and had been left, the night before, at the inn to be conveyed thither by the next coach.

When Mr. Parchment heard this, his anxiety was exceeding great, for he knew Mrs. Tabitha to be a litigious old

woman, and he knew the china to be worth a considerable sum of money. How to escape from this dilemma was, therefore, the serious object of his thoughts, and at last he devised a plan. Looking into the box, he found that only one saucer and two cups were broken: the rest were whole. He proposed, therefore, that the fragments, with which he had been lately decorated, should be collected and deposited in the case, a fresh cover procured and nailed on, the whole sent off to London, and the person to whom it was directed might suppose that the fractures had been occasioned by the jolting of the coach, and the unskillful manner in which the china had been packed. This artful expedient was adopted, and Mr. Parchment slipped a crown piece into the hands of the waiter to purchase his secrecy.

The matter being thus happily accommodated, the lawyer half forgot the pain

of his rump in the secret rejoicings of his heart at this lucky escape ; and though he could not sit, he now stood at the table, and dispatched the remaining part of what he had to do, with great earnestness. Occasionally, indeed, he wriggled about, as if not perfectly comfortable : but he contrived to get through his task. Matters being thus far settled, there remained some certain forms to be gone through before the sheriff of the county ; and accordingly the whole party, headed by Mr. Parchment, who led the way with a most graceful obliquity of motion, proceeded to that gentleman's house, where every thing being done which the law, in such cases, requires, the bailiffs took their leave. Mr. Parchment was paid for his attendance, though it was likely to cost more than his earnings to restore his flesh to its pristine state, and Caleb, his uncle, Ezekiel and Paul, set off for their own village.

CHAPTER XII.

Praise of obscurity.—Great preparations for splendor by Dorothea—Caleb and his uncle perform a concert—Mr. Barnaby turns author—Disquisition upon men of genius.

By this time it was nearly mid-day, and Mr. Barnaby began to be uneasy as to the consequences of his absence among his scholars, while Ezekiel expressed some doubts whether Scroggins would be able to go on with the parson's breeches for want of black thread. They hastened forwards, therefore, each anxious about his own concerns, and each possessing a most stoical indifference with regard to the concerns of any other.

Meanwhile, Caleb and Paul had fallen behind, and were enjoying a very instructive conversation. Caleb, who had never read Spenser, though he had heard of him, was giving Paul a very learned

account of his beauties and defects, and enlarging most critically and profoundly upon the excellence of his language, its simplicity, and the wonderful variety of his thoughts. Then he adverted to the richness of his imagination, and to the nature of the stanza which he employed; regretted that Burleigh was not a patron of literature, and extolled Sir Philip Sydney for giving him two hundred pounds instead of fifty. To this torrent of erudition and original sagacity Paul listened very attentively, and wondered how so great a man could have so much condescension. Such, however, was Caleb's appetite for fame, that he would sooner talk of hexameters to a shoe-black, or of logic to a tallow-chandler, if he happened to be in their company, than suffer either of them to depart without knowing that he could discourse about such things. No wonder, then, that he held forth with such volubility to Paul, who comprehended

a little, of what he said. To be understood, however, was not always the wish of Mr. Inkhorn; for he knew, as many moderns also know, that obscurity is a very fascinating quality, and a weak mind is never so likely to form lofty notions of another, as when he is incomprehensible. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*. That which we cannot fathom must be deep, for we never suspect that our own line is short. To be plain and intelligible would argue weakness and imbecility: but to be confused, fantastical, and obscure is a sure evidence of superiority of genius. If Shakespeare had been always easily understood, where would have been the room for his commentators to explain his meaning? No; every man who writes for posterity and hopes to have a *variorum* edition of his works, must carefully guard against being too intelligible, for we are very apt to despise what we easily comprehend.

Caleb, however, was obscure from necessity rather than from principle. He did not always understand himself, and it was hardly to be hoped, therefore, that any one else should understand him. He could talk with unabating ardour; but like the preceptor of Abelard, his discourse was a fire whose smoke obscured every thing but enlightened nothing. He was fearless of detection, for he had no sense of shame. The finger of reproach he mocked with the laugh of impudence, and the tongue of accusation he silenced by the clamours of ignorance and insolence. Every great man, however, must have his proper element. A conqueror will shine among commanders and a statesman among politicians: but bring the conqueror to the politicians, or the statesman to the commanders, and they would lose much of that admiration they before excited. So Caleb, who mingled only with the ignorant, reigned with undisputed great-

ness; and he would have taken care not to risk that greatness, had he been permitted to approach the learned.

As they journeyed onwards, Ezekiel was sometimes an attentive listener to the discourse of Mr. Inkhorn, and he could not help admiring it, in spite of his antipathy to a poet. Caleb, also, shewed such a partiality to his son, that the father's heart was insensibly won, and before he got home, he actually rejoiced that he had been favoured with an opportunity of befriending him. So much, indeed, was he fascinated with his manner, that when they arrived at their place of destination, he invited Mr. Barnaby and his nephew to dine with him next day, to which they cordially assented; and they now separated each for his respective home.

Paul had no sooner entered the doors, than he hastened to his mother to communicate the happy tidings of Caleb's invitation to dinner, and of his father's

having subscribed for half a year instead of a quarter. Dorothea was greatly rejoiced at both these pieces of intelligence, but especially at the idea of receiving a poet to dinner. It was an honor so unexpected, so far beyond her most ambitious hopes, that she could scarcely keep her joy within any reasonable bounds. She frisked about the house, like a cat's tail in the sun, and wearied Ezekiel every five minutes through the day, about what preparations she should make. Her peach-coloured silk gown was taken out of lavender to be aired : her green velvet shoes were released from three folds of white paper : a white dimity petticoat, with a deep flounce was also prepared, and she was a long while undecided whether she should put on a pair of sky-blue, stockings, or a pair of white cotton ; but she decided in favour of the sky blue because they would suit better with her green velvet shoes. Ezekiel's plum-coloured breeches, and coat

to match, were also introduced to the day-light for the purpose of being aired, as well as a fine cravat, with worked corners, which had belonged to his grandfather, and which he himself had never worn since the day he was married to Dorothea. His pink satin waistcoat, likewise, ornamented with wreaths of gold twist and spangles, was brought forth, together with his silver knee and shoe-buckles. Nor was Paul forgotten in the midst of these preparations. Every exertion was employed to give him the same elegance of dress as was to distinguish his father and mother. Besides this attention to personal decoration, there was a necessary observance bestowed upon certain domestic arrangements. The best knives and forks, the best table-cloth, the best plates and dishes, the best salt-cellars, and in short the best of every thing was got in readiness for this great and important occasion. Caleb had never been so honoured before.

Meanwhile, Paul had retired to his room, to enjoy, unmolested, the perusal of his books. Spenser was laid aside for a while, and he sat down to the *Vicar of Wakefield*, the natural and simple narration of which strongly captivated him. Unable yet to analyse the sources of his pleasure, he only felt that it was great : and so strongly was he interested in the chain of events and in the characters delineated, that he did not close his eyes in sleep till he had finished it. The charming simplicity of the work, the inimitable humour of some parts, and the tender pathos of others, so entranced his young mind with delight, that he could have wept when he came to the conclusion to think that there was no more.

Now was the day spring of Paul's genius. The torch had been applied : the fire was kindled, and its progress was gradual and constant. One book led to another : new ideas flowed in upon

him : new feelings were generated : and a new medium was interposed between himself and the world. He read without any discrimination : yet he read much, and thought more. He made some not unsuccessful attempts to arrange his knowledge. He — but I am anticipating the order of events. Let me shew that I understand chronology better than the French poet who apologized for placing a European town in Asia Minor by saying that he had never studied that science.

When Caleb and his uncle arrived at home, they found matters more orderly than they could well have expected. The boys had assembled at the usual hour, and learning, from the servant, that their master was absent, they arranged themselves in the school room, and deputed their senior fellow to fill Mr. Barnaby's place, during his absence. It is probable, however, that they would not have comported themselves with

such edifying regularity, had they not been uncertain at what moment their master might return; and they were too well experienced in his application of the birch to incur any taste of that salutary twig on the present occasion. From such motives proceeded their orderly conduct, and Mr. Barnaby was well pleased with it when he returned, by which time, also, the school hours had elapsed, so that he had nothing to do but to dismiss them in form, which he willingly did, for he was wearied with his walk, and his mind was exhausted by the various events of the morning. A little repose, however, and a hearty dinner of boiled beef and cabbage, had a powerful influence in restoring both his corporeal and mental vigour, and as there was no school that afternoon, he resigned himself to a lazy luxury of indolence. Caleb, who was nearly in the same predicament, applied to the same restorative, and after he had

copiously employed it, he composed himself to sleep in his uncle's arm chair, while Mr. Barnaby nodded at him with great solemnity and perseverance in the opposite corner.

It is impossible to say how long they might have slept had not the concert which their noses were performing awakened each other: and after they had gaped, stretched, and gone through the other ceremonies usually performed by a man between sleeping and waking, Mr. Barnaby proposed that they should regale themselves with a glass, which proposition was readily acceded to by Caleb. While the liquor was preparing, our pedagogue addressed himself to his nephew with much solemnity, and informed him, that as he had, on the preceding afternoon, been so kind as to communicate certain portions of his inestimable work, he hoped he would permit him, (Mr. Barnaby) faintly to requite the obligation, by reading to him

a little *jeu d'esprit*, which he had composed many years ago, and had kept by him ever since. To this request Caleb could not do otherwise than assent, though he would rather have avoided the business, for he had too great an opinion of his own powers to believe that any other person could produce aught worthy of his attention ; and he happened, besides, to be in a humor very ill qualified for listening. However, he forbore to give even the least hint of disinclination.

When Mr. Barnaby had thus opened the business, he proceeded as follows :
“ You must not suppose, sir, that I have any literary talents ; I have none at all ; that is, I have none which may be called talents, though I have, perhaps, a certain knack that would do as well as talents, had I been accustomed to employ it. I don't pretend to be a genius, nor any thing of that kind, so don't expect to find any wonders in what I'm going

to read. The fact is, when I am lonely, which I am apt to be now and then, in this out-of-the-way-place, I sometimes write things, and afterwards burn them ; but this, which I am now going to submit to your superior judgment, is the child of my affection : I have preserved it because I like it ; and I like it, because it relates to a family event which I still remember with emotion."

Caleb's curiosity was not a little excited by this exordium, and he began to think that there was something more in the business than he at first conjectured. He begged to know the nature of the event alluded to, when his uncle thus went on.

" I must give you the history of the piece or you will not be able to relish it. But let us drink first." So saying he applied the glass to his lips and took a hearty draught of brandy and water, which example was immediately followed by Caleb.

“ Now,” continued he, “ you shall hear. About fourteen years ago, when I entered this house, your grandmother Deborah was alive, and your aunt Tabitha. We lived together, and were monstrously comfortable. It was at that time that I was raised to my present situation of clerk of this parish. I was before only sexton. When I was made clerk, I thought it became me to make some appearance ; and as I then lived in a little mud-walled cottage, on the edge of the common, not far from the churchyard, I thought of looking out for a decent kind of house for myself, my mother, and my sister. I did so, and pitched upon this one, which had been newly repaired, and was about to be quitted by the person who inhabited it. I agreed to take the house, and so far all was well ; but I found that there were fixtures to be paid for, amounting to five pounds ; four shillings. This was a large sum for a poor man to make up. I had not

got so much, and I could not borrow it. That very grate was one of the fixtures, and that corner cupboard another. Well, as I was saying, these things were to be paid for before I could enter the house. What to do I did not know. At last, a scheme was hit upon which was a work of love and family piety; and the recollection of it so affected me, as I sat thinking of it one evening, while smoking my pipe in the garden, about five years after your grandmother's death, and two after your aunt's, that I could not help relating the whole circumstance in a solemn and pathetic manner. When I had finished it, I could not find in my heart to destroy it, for, it was a sort of family picture, so I have kept it ever since."

"You have excited in me a great deal of curiosity," said Caleb; "pray let me hear it."

"That you shall," rejoined Mr. Barnaby, as he arose from the table and ad-

vanced towards his bureau, whence he drew forth a little green leather bag, in one corner of which was deposited the precious relic. It had evidently been in frequent use, for the folds of the paper were worn through; and it bore, besides, many marks of much handling. As he opened it out, Caleb was not sorry to see that the pages were few: for when an author finds a patient listener, who can put limits to his vanity? When Mr. Barnaby had it ready for perusal he continued thus: "The nature of my vocation makes me familiar with the manner of scripture; and I have, I know not how, adopted it in this production. I think, indeed, it gives a fine effect by adding to the solemnity. Not to detain you any longer, however, with general remarks I will now proceed to read it." Accordingly, he began as follows, with a clear voice, and a melody not unlike that which he usually employed in chaunting the responses on a Sunday.

THE FAMILY CONSULTATION :

OR

How shall we get into a new House ?

“ * * * * Now *Peter* and his sister *Tabitha* had been to look at the house, and they liked it : and they journeyed home to their mother *Deborah*, and told her that they liked the dwelling. And *Deborah* smiled and took snuff : but she spake not. Such was the taciturnity of a woman !

“ As it came to pass, however, that all were much and greatly delighted with the house, *Peter* took resolution, and said, Verily I will enter it : yea, I will. So he journeyed back, and did consent accordingly to take the house of him that then occupied it : a plaisterer, and Lath by name. *Peter* did consent : but lo ! and here arose the difficulty.

“ This plaisterer had put up, for his

own convenience, and for the convenience of his family, (for he had a wife called Susan, and three children, besides a servant,) sundry articles denominated fixtures, which fixtures did consist of four grates, a corner cupboard, a water-butt and a shelf, besides two locks and three bolts. Now, as he had paid for these things, and had used them but little, he did expect to be paid for them by *Peter*. *Peter* was proud, (pride maketh the heart vain) and said yea : but his pocket was humble and said nay.

“ And the price of these fixtures was five pounds four shillings, and *Peter* had ninepence halfpenny at home.

“ And it came to pass that *Peter*, who sojourned with his mother Deborah, and his sister Tabitha, began to cast about for means to raise this heavy sum. Much did he think, and sore perplexed he was that he thought in vain. At length, a thought came to him, which was a lucky one. And he

smiled with glee; for great was the joy of his heart. But what is joy? Ah! what is joy? Like a flash in the pan, no sooner seen than gone; or like an eel that slips out of your fingers when you catch hold of its tail: or like a stone plumped into a pond, which makes a dimple in the water, and sinks for ever; or like sugar melting in the mouth, possessed and lost in the same instant: or like a bubble puffed from a tobacco-pipe by a child, pretty for a moment then vanishes: or like a jack-a-lantern, which hops before us into bogs, and straight is gone. Ah! what is joy?

“ But Peter felt joy in what he thought: and what he thought was this.

“ Near unto where he dwelled between walls of mud, there was a shop, having over its door three golden balls. What mystic meaning these balls might have, hath remained unknown from generation to generation; but the place to

years cannot abate my sorrow. Methinks I see my mother even now as she stood with the silk gown in her hand, with a look of pity in her eyes, and——ah, Sir, here's to you," and he emptied the glass of brandy and water, while Caleb, glad of something to do, which might save him from the disgrace of laughing, proceeded forthwith to mix another. When his uncle had indulged in a tender effusion of woe, he resumed his reading as follows:

"And she took out a rich damask table cloth, and said 'Lo! I will add this:' and she sat down, and anguish overcame her, and she roared loudly and bitterly.

"When silence was obtained, *Tabitha*, the sister of *Peter*, arose, and presented her offering, which consisted of two silver spoons, two damask napkins, and two oyster knives mounted with silver.

"And yet there was not enough: "so *Peter* drew forth his watch and placed it on the heap, but still there was too little."

"Yes, Sir," interrupted Mr. Barnaby;

"this is the very watch," drawing forth an old-fashioned one from his fob : "it was two years before I could redeem it : I mention these things because they serve to give a reality to the thing !"

"They do so," rejoined Caleb ; "and that's a great merit in a work of fiction."

"To be sure," added his uncle, unmindful of this ingenious figure of speech, but I'll not detain you much longer : I am almost at the end of it."

"Now all eyes were fixed on Deborah, but hers were fixed upon the silk gown. But, when she understood that their joint offerings would still not produce five pounds four shillings, she arose once more, and retired into an inner apartment, and none went with her.

"While she was gone, all was silence and breathless expectation.

"After a while, she came forth holding in her hands a black quilted petticoat : 'Lo !' said she, 'this was my aunt Barbara's, and yet I give it : and she placed it

on the heap, and sunk back in her chair of ease, overcome with emotion.

“ And it was now thought that there was enough. The offerings were divided into two parts, and were enclosed in napkins, and *Tabitha* and *Peter* went forth with them.

“ And they conveyed them to their uncle’s, obtained on them five pounds four shillings, and therewith *Peter* paid for the fixtures, and thus did they get into a new house.”

“ Into this very house,” added Mr. Barnaby folding up his manuscript, and looking at his nephew with an eye of eager expectation, ready to receive that praise which so usually passes between authors, when they read their works to each other. Not, indeed, that Mr. Barnaby could aspire to the dignity of a regularly bred author ; but he was, like most other men, not unwilling to become an object of attention, and still less unwilling to open his ears to the language of commendation.

Caleb, whose politeness was equal to his love of truth, bestowed the most lavish eulogiums upon his uncle's production; and he seemed so sincere in his praises, that Mr. Barnaby, in the simplicity of his heart, inquired if he thought it would be worth publishing.

"Worth publishing!" exclaimed Caleb in affected rapture. "I'll tell you what: I am now preparing for the press a selection from the writings of the most celebrated moderns, and if you will give me that, I'll introduce it among them."

"Will you," ejaculated Mr. Barnaby with ecstasy.

"Yes, I will," rejoined his nephew.

"Then you are a noble-minded fellow," added the pedagogue; "and I am glad to find you above the mean jealousy which too often accompanies men of genius: for my own part I detest it."

It is evident from this declaration, that Mr. Barnaby began, already, to lay claim to that easily acquired title a *man of genius*. Certainly, genius never was

so plentiful as in the present age. It is impossible to take up a review, or a magazine, or even a newspaper, without being struck with the wonderful profusion of that literary commodity. Every novel, if it be not absolutely despicable, is the offspring of genius : every play, which a tasteless audience or a manager's effrontery permits to live nine nights, flows from undoubted genius : and every epic poem, containing the martyrdom of language, and the torture of common sense, is pronounced to be the effort of a mighty genius : but a few thousand eight syllable lines are the surest evidence of that quality. Whatever posterity may say of us, they will not be able to deny, that we are more liberal than our ancestors. Dyden abused Shadwell, and Pope abused Cibber : but we abuse none ; with generous profusion, we give the palm to all. Literature was never before so truly a republic : we have a community of talent : but no aristocracy, no monarchy.

My readers will perhaps condemn these complaints as trite and commonplace. They are so. But, does that invalidate their truth? Certainly not. Then away with the objection. I would not be thought to be fastidiously querulous; yet, to declaim against our own times, seems to be the common and unalienable privilege of man. We always find, in that which is gone, something to please us, which we can seldom discover in that which we have. I have known a man who never put on a new coat without sighing over the ruins of that which he discarded; and a lady, who seldom kept a servant longer than a month, and yet never failed to commemorate the merits of those she had discharged. But this love of the past, and this disgust of the present, are more vehemently expressed, when we compare our own times with the happy era of our ancestors. Then it is that we are overwhelmed with regret and terror, to find ourselves

born in an age of total degeneracy : of degeneracy which threatens, by the dissolution of all moral restraints, the most awful evils to society. Such universal turpitude never could have existed at any former period. This recalls to my mind an anecdote, which I will here relate.

Mr. Harris, of Salisbury, was once amusing a friend who was of a melancholy disposition, by reading to him a passage from a book which detailed the enormities that were daily practised in England. His friend shrugged up his shoulders, sighed, and exclaimed, " Ah ! too true, too true ; what a world ! what can become of us ? It is impossible that things can go on in this way for another twelve-month ; it is utterly impossible ; ah, my friend : read no more : it distracts me—— " Mr. Harris, however, quieted his alarms and his distraction, by informing him that the book he was reading from was published in the sixteenth century. As, therefore, we had so long out-

lived such alarming symptoms, there was good hope of twelve months longer existence.

There can be little doubt, that this admiration of past times arises from that discontent of the human mind, by which it is rarely suffered to remain at rest, With the present we are never satisfied ; and when we are not bewailing departed happiness, we are busy in anticipating the future. To a being like man, born with hopes that are engrafted on his reason, it is natural that he should not rest indolently contented. But while I thus dignify the principle, I blame the practice under certain circumstances. It is the mark of a narrow understanding to find nothing laudable in the age we live in : and they who are most clamorous in depreciating their own times, do it generally, from inability to do better, or from habitual peevishness which casts a gloom round all the events of life.

Yet, a moralist may find just cause of complaint in the present day. We have lived to see prostitutes pensioned, and the friends of prostitutes supported by public subscription. We have lived to see shameless demagogues insult the throne and the virtues of the people by attacks, on all that is great and dignified, as desperate as they are infamous. Having seen these things what may we not expect?

O proceres censore opus est, an haruspice nobis ?

Let Mr. Barnaby and his nephew answer for this digression if my readers are displeased with it: but if they approve of it, I shall be very willing to answer for it myself. At all events it ought to conclude a chapter, that time may be allowed for its digestion.

CHAPTER XIII.

*The solemn effects of fear—A romantic adventure
—A fine illustration of Burke—Asses are
sometimes dangerous.*

It was finally settled by Caleb, that his uncle's effusion should appear among the choice productions of celebrated moderns: not indeed with his name, for who knew Peter Barnaby? It was to be by *a distinguished literary character*, with which designation the school-master was highly delighted; and the consciousness of greatness began to grow so fast within him, that he already ceased to view his nephew with that submissive reverence which he had felt at first. He joked freely with him, and sometimes, even contradicted his opinions, though he never ventured so far as that without a strong sense of his temerity; so true,

however, is the proverb, which I have remembered ever since I wrote it as a copy at school, that familiarity breeds contempt, or at least something approaching very nearly to it.

By this time the second glass of brandy and water was drunk, and the sun was set, while night, as it usually does, followed next. But she did not come like a sober matron : for her brow was disfigured with gloom, and her voice proclaimed contention ; in plain words, the appearance of the heavens denoted an approaching storm. The wind whistled, the clouds gathered gloomily together, the lightning flashed, at intervals, through the darkened atmosphere, and the thunder rolled at a distance. Neither Caleb nor his uncle was romantic enough to enjoy this elemental strife ; though they very naturally congratulated each other upon being safe from its influence : there was, however ; something sufficiently selfish in this con-

gratulation, and they were not suffered to enjoy it long.

While they sat listening to the increasing storm, their ears were suddenly assailed by a dismal groaning, that seemed to proceed from the yard, which adjoined the house ; it sounded like the voice of one that was in jeopardy, and it was repeated at intervals. Caleb hearkened to the awful noise, with expanded eyes and suspended breath ; while his uncle, putting a thumb into each ear, crept under a large dining table, that stood at one end of the room, where he lay sweating with fear, and exclaiming, every moment, " Lord have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner !" This pious ejaculation did not tend much to sooth the terrors of Caleb, who absolutely wanted the intrepidity of his uncle (such as it was), for he was afraid either to move or speak : he sat, staring at the door, with a ghastly countenance, expecting, every instant, to behold some dreadful appa-

rition make its appearance. To add to the terror of the scene there was no light in the room : for they had sat conversing, after the evening closed in, without once feeling the want of a candle.

The groans were still repeated, and with a greater expression of agony, when Caleb heard the door of the room slowly open, and the sound of feet gently approaching. He could distinguish nothing, nor had he much time to conjecture ; for he felt something touch his knee, at which he uttered a loud scream, while his uncle roared under the table with all his might and main. Putting forth his hands instinctively, they came in contact with two soft substances, which the terrified imagination of Mr. Inkhorn likened to two dancing bladders. His agitation was now so great that he darted from his seat, and tumbled over something in his way, on which he lay sprawling with outstretched arms and legs, while he implored his uncle, in the

most pathetic manner, to come to his relief. Believing that it was some demon or some ghost that he had fallen over, he was endeavouring to extricate himself from the horrible situation, when his ears were saluted with the exclamation, "Christ! you have broke my back!" delivered in a voice that was not unfamiliar to him: before, however, he could completely recollect himself, he was addressed by name, and entreated, for God's sake to get off, for she was almost smothered; when he discovered that he had been rolling over Dolly, Mr. Barnaby's maid servant, who, hearing the groans which had caused such terror, crept softly up stairs and entered the room without any ceremony, so strong was the impulse of her fear. In pacing along, she had come in contact with Caleb's knee, who, stretching forth his hands, they happened to alight on Dolly's bosom, palpitating with alarm, and which Mr. Inkhorn's bewildered mind

had conceived to be two huge bladders floating in the wind. In his eagerness to quit the chair, he had overset poor Dolly ; and he was now lying on her, pleased to find that she was flesh and blood, and no sprite or devil.

Whatever thoughts such a situation might have put into Caleb's head at another time, he was now unable to think of any thing but his fears, or to rejoice in having Dolly under him, otherwise, than as it proved that he was not in supernatural company. He ventured to roll off, and to assist the affrighted girl up ; when Mr. Barnaby, who had uncorked one of his ears, and heard the latter part of Dolly's exclamation, by which he recognized her, inquired in a whisper, if she had heard the noise ; but before she could reply he was answered by another groan from the yard, at which he replaced his thumb and sent forth a dismal sigh, while Caleb crept behind

the great arm chair, and squatted upon his haunches like a hare.

In this wretched plight they continued for about five minutes longer, during which nothing more was heard ; when Mr. Barnaby again venturing to dislodge one of his thumbs, listened for a while ; but the groans not being repeated, he called gently to Dolly, and bade her fetch a light. This she flatly refused to do, declaring that she would not put her precious soul in the power of the devil. It was in vain that her master assumed an authoritative tone, Dolly was immoveable. What then was to be done ? Mr. Barnaby would not go, neither would Caleb, and they could not remain in the dark, one crouching behind the chair, another cowering under the table, and Dolly squeezed into a little corner cupboard, sitting upon a large uncut cheese, and distilling drops of sweat through every part of her clothes. At length,

after some deliberation, it was resolved that they should all join hands, and descend, in company, into the kitchen, there to procure a light.

They soon began to put this scheme into execution. Mr. Barnaby crawled from his hiding-place, and groping about, got hold of his nephew's coat-tail, and they both rose up together, their teeth chattering like dice rattling in a box. They then summoned Dolly to approach, who quitted her cheese, and stepping cautiously along, feeling for one of them, caught hold of Caleb by his nose, which, in her consternation, she grappled so tightly that he roared with the pain. When he had disengaged his proboscis from the hand of the fair maid, he locked his arm in hers, and the trio thus stood, ready for departure, though neither would venture to take the first step.

After mutual exhortations, it was agreed by Dolly and Caleb, that Mr. Barnaby, both on account of his age, and his

spiritual vocation, should lead the way; to which, however, he would not consent till he had ineffectually endeavoured to get out at the door abreast. There being no alternative, therefore, he was just about to head the procession, when another groan from the yard disconcerted him so much that he fell upon his knees, and began to pray with uncommon fervour and devotion, while Dolly, who was in the rear, burst into tears and loud lamentations; after a while, however, as there was no repetition of the groans, their agitation began to subside, and Mr. Barnaby raising himself on his feet, desired Caleb to take hold of his arm, which he did, while his other arm was fast locked in Dolly's. All this time the wind continued to roar with unabating violence, and the rain descended in torrents; and a superstitious or poetic imagination might have fancied the direful groans to be nothing less than the yellings of the demon of the storm; but neither Caleb,

his uncle, nor Dolly, had such lofty and aerial notions.

They had now reached the parlour door, and Mr. Barnaby mustered courage enough to open it, and issue forth into the passage, followed by his trembling coadjutors : but here he made a pause and endeavoured to penetrate the profound gloom of the kitchen stairs, whose awful abyss yawned before him. He tried in vain, however ; all was darkness and horror. He proceeded fearfully along, and in due progress of time began to descend, which he did very cautiously and very slowly : but when he had got about midway, he trod upon one of Dolly's pattens which she had negligently left there, and his foot slipping, he found it necessary to roll down the rest of the way, which he did with great expedition, followed by Caleb and Dolly ; for being all concatenated together, it was impossible that one should be trundled down without the others. Mr. Barnaby roared ;

Caleb ejaculated; and Dolly screamed: but Mr. Barnaby's condition was the most lamentable, for he had alighted with his posteriors in a tub of foul linen which was lying in water ready for washing next day, while Dolly and Caleb had reversed their late situation, the former being now uppermost. The exclamations of Mr. Barnaby, however, soon attracted their notice, for the water had soaked to his skin before he could disengage himself, which he soon did, by springing out of the tub with a bound; by which means his heel came in contact with Caleb's head, where it produced a small contusion.

In a few minutes, however, the triumvirate were upon their legs, and resuming their former position, they entered the kitchen, where Dolly, finding the tinder box, she proceeded to get a light; but her hand shook so that when the tinder was ignited, it was with difficulty she could hold the match steady enough to kindle the brimstone. She

succeeded at last, and the candle was lighted, to the inexpressible joy of all present, who believed half their danger diminished by the power which they now had of seeing it : thus finely illustrating the truth of Burke's position, that obscurity is a source of terror. (See the *Sublime and Beautiful*, Part II. Sec. III.

But it would defy all power of language to attempt to describe the looks with which they encountered each other, when their faces became visible. Pale and trembling, each seemed to view the other with eyes of terror and consternation : none of them spoke for some minutes, but listened, with mute alarm, for another groan if another might be heard : nothing, however, was audible but the roaring of the storm, which added to the sublime horrors of the scene.

After a long pause, Caleb, gulping down a rising fear, proposed that they should go into the yard, in order to as-

certain the cause of their alarm ; but this proposition was at first listened to with astonishment. However, after a few moments reflection, Mr. Barnaby concurred in the wisdom of the measure, observing that it would be folly to pass the night in that state of uncertainty and alarm, which they must do, unless they could discover the source of it. " If it be indeed a ghost," said he, " I have an infallible remedy for laying it, with which my grandfather once compelled a spirit, who haunted his house, in the likeness of a roasted apple, to fly up the chimney, which it did with a terrible bounce that broke down four of the bricks, but it never appeared again ; so we have nothing to fear from any thing supernatural, if I can only see it, and know it to be a ghost. And as to what's human, you can take the poker," continued he, addressing himself to Caleb, " and I'll take the tongs, while

Dolly goes first with the light, and I warrant we'll pepper them."

Dolly, who did not approve of this distribution of the forces, proposed that they should each have a lanthorn, for the wind would blow a candle out, and that they should go side by side, that if any persons were there, they might see, at once, the number they had to oppose. There was wisdom too in this counsel. Mr. Barnaby thought, for in that case they would perhaps run away, and so all bloodshed would be avoided. Three candles were accordingly lighted and put into three lanthorns: Mr. Barnaby grappled the tongs, Caleb seized the poker, and Dolly, that she might have some defence in case of attack, shouldered a mop. Thus armed, they ascended the stairs, but made a full pause at the yard door; first, because they heard another groan, and secondly, because, on account of its narrowness, one must

go out first, and another last: and who was to enjoy those respective posts was a matter of some importance. It was decreed, however, that Caleb, as having the most powerful weapon, should emerge first, and Dolly as being the weaker vessel, should issue out last. Caleb grumbled at this arrangement, but he could not, with decency, decline it: so he manfully unbolted the door, and put one leg out, then paused, then the other leg, paused again, and then told his uncle to keep close to him.

In about three minutes they were all in the yard together, enduring the "pitiless pelting of the storm," and hearing another groan, at which they were all about to turn and run back, but rallied and went forward, they paced fearfully to the spot whence it proceeded. They arrived there; they stopped: they stared: they laughed. What an adventure! It was a poor ragged ass, who had contrived to get into Mr. Barnaby's garden, to

regale himself, but returning a different way, he tried to force through some palings, when his head was squeezed in between two of them so tightly that he could not extricate it. At every ineffectual struggle to accomplish his deliverance he sent forth a most piteous groan, something between a yell and a bray; and these groans were the innocent cause of Mr. Barnaby's and his household's terror.

Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.

HOR.

“ A pize upon thee for a beast,” exclaimed Dolly in a rage, and bestowing a hearty thwack upon the ass's rump with her mop, at which salutation he raised up his heels and laid his antagonist sprawling in a bed of cabbages. From this dilemma Caleb and his uncle soon helped her, and then proceeded to extricate the ass, which they did with some difficulty, and quitted him with mani-

fold unchristian curses as they led him to the gate to turn him into the lane; after which they returned to the house with more glee than they had issued from it, and being all drenched with rain, they forthwith changed their apparel. Supper ensued, and the repast over, each retired to his bed ruminating upon the strange adventure of the evening. To their slumbers we will now leave them, and return to Ezekiel's house, where solemn matters were occurring during this event.

END OF VOL. I.









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